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THE CHURCH IN THE FURNACE

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THE CHURCH IN THE FURNACE

ESSAYS BY SEVENTEEN TEMPORARY CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHAPLAINS ON ACTIVE SERVICE IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

EDITED BY

F. B. MACNUTT

SENIOR CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES, CANON OF SOUTHWARK

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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1917

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THIS BOOK IS

DEDICATED

TO

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AT HOME

BY SOME OF ITS CHAPLAINS

WHO HAVE SERVED THE ARMIES IN FRANCE

AND FLANDERS

IN PROUD AND THANKFUL MEMORY

OF

OUR BROTHER-CHAPLAINS

WHO HAVE DIED IN THAT SERVICE

Killed in Action.

E. F. DUNCAN.
R. E. INGLIS.
C. B. PLUMMER.
M. B. PEEL.
H. O. SPINK.
J. R. STEWART.
E. W. TREVOR.
F. H. TUKE.
H. B. ST. J. DE VINE.
F. R. HARBORD.
H. H. EAST.
G. M. EVANS.
B. P. PLUMTRE.
W. D. GEARE.
B. C. RUCK KEENE.
W. L. S. DALLAS.

Died of Wounds.

C. E. DOUDNEY.
F. W. HEWITT.
T. G. JONES.
C. W. MITCHELL.
C. H. SCHOOLING.
C. H. GARRETT.

Died on Active Service.

P. J. KIRWAN.
E. JOHNSON-SMYTH.
H. F. LEDBITTER.
D. C. WOODHOUSE.
V. C. BODDINGTON.
A. M. PRATT.

September, 1917.

A 9506

School of Theology
at Claremont

" For the proudly guarded lips,
Streets where men nor strive nor cry,
For the armies and the ships,
Youth and laughing chivalry.
For the things that shall be won,
Clean and splendid from the flame,
For the brave new life begun,
Blessed be Thy holy Name !

They shall see who are unborn,
That remote, resplendent thing,
Of the which, forespent and torn,
All the world is travailing.
Lift your hearts above the years,
Thank our Lord not once or twice,
For the horror and the tears,
Bitterness and sacrifice."—J. S.

" War will only be overcome when a moral substitute has been provided for it which will absorb all its qualities of strenuousness, indignation at wrong, indifference to property and life ; for, to the end, justice and freedom can be defended only by the courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice which fear not them that kill the body and after that have no more that they can do."—JOHN OMAN.

" Romance, that was
The coloured air of a forgotten cause
About the heads of heroes dead and bright,
Shines home : we are accompanied with light
Because of youth among us ; and the name
Of man is touched with an ethereal flame :
There is a newness in the world begun,
A difference in the setting of the sun.
Oh, though we stumble in blinding tears, and though
The beating of our hearts may never know
Absence in pangs more desolately keen,
Yet blessed are our eyes, because they have seen."

LAURENCE BINYON.

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THE Church is in the furnace. We have felt the scorching of the purgatorial fires. And we Chaplains not least, who have moved where the flames are hottest and have seen the pure metal dropping apart from the dross. There are those, doubtless, to whom such language will seem flamboyant and foreign to the facts. They have feared much for their country, and have trembled at the possibilities of disaster through the victory of the Central Powers. They may have felt a mild apprehension for their religion, as the Church's critics have waxed eloquent about "the failure of Christianity" amidst the upheaval of a world-war in this twentieth century after Christ. But the fire has not touched their churchmanship. They hope that the coming of peace will mean more or less a return to pre-war conditions in the Church, with a few superficial changes to popularise worship for the men who come back. To such Churchmen apocalyptic language will always appear to be as melodramatic as it is certainly remote from the smooth proprieties of sentiment and convention which make up the only religion they know.

But there are many others who have felt during

three years of war that only imagery like that of Patmos can express the trials and experiences through which we are passing. That is the feeling which inspires the title of this book. These Essays by Clergy of the Church of England who are serving, or have served, the armies abroad, are the expression of thoughts which have come to us, under the intense stress and strain of Active Service, about the life and work of the Church as we left it when we embarked for the Front, and as we see it now from afar. We came out dimly expecting that our religion would pass through a fierce ordeal, and actual contact with warfare has not belied our expectations. The test has been sterner than any of us can have foreseen. The results we can scarcely formulate yet, as we look forward to returning to the old surroundings. But one thing is certain: we can never again be content with much that we accepted as quite natural in those far-away days before we came out here. We have seen visions and dreamed dreams, and to forget them or to refuse to act upon them would be treachery to the Church we love. Hope and faith have been saved in the trenches, but they have passed through a burning furnace; and there must needs be a difference, made manifest in the fiery process. "The day" has "declared it." They have been "saved, so as by fire."

Several points should be made clear to those who read this book.

It is in no sense an official pronouncement by Army Chaplains upon the subjects with which it deals. All the writers hold, or have held, temporary commissions in the Chaplains' Department, and are

or have been (with one exception)[1] on Active Service in France and Flanders, for longer or shorter periods, under the conditions upon which such commissions are given to civilian clergy during the period of the war. They have no authority to speak for anyone but themselves, much less for the Department as a whole. It will be seen at once that they represent very varied standpoints in Church thought. Each is responsible for his own Essay alone, and has written quite independently of the rest. While care has been taken to avoid overlapping as far as possible, there has been no opportunity for conference or discussion. Nearly all the Essays have been written in circumstances of extraordinary difficulty, in the intervals between battles or in other surroundings where interruptions are many and frequent and leave little opportunity for literary work.

I draw attention to these facts with the hope that I may induce the meticulous critic to look upon our work with less readiness to dwell upon shortcomings which might have been avoided, had the writers been able to work at leisure and with the closer co-operation that would have been possible, if we had waited till the end of the war. But it would seem likely that any value the book may have will be found to lie in the fact that it has "the smell of fire" in it, because it has been largely written in the very midst of experiences which urge men to speak the truth they see as never before in their lives.

I am anxious as Editor to place on record my gratitude to our Chief, the Deputy Chaplain-General

[1] The writer of the last Essay.

of the British Expeditionary Force, Bishop Gwynne, without whose encouragement and support I could not have attempted to secure and to organise the help of so many of his Chaplains, and to my fellow-workers, who by their always ready help in preparing the volume for the press with as little delay as possible have made my task as easy and delightful as it has certainly been full of interest.

If anything that we have written brings help to those at home who are thinking out the problems that confront Church and Nation in the days of reconstruction which lie ahead, our purpose will have been achieved. Achieved, that is, if such thinking leads to action, for we have little interest in merely adding to the already vast mass of expressed opinion. In the Church, as in much else in British life, thinking often tends to evaporate in talk.

F. B. M.

St. Omer,
September, 1917.

CONTENTS

PAGE

EDITOR'S FOREWORD ix

PREFACE xix

By the Right Rev. Llewellyn H. Gwynne, C.M.G., D.D., Deputy Chaplain-General of the British Expeditionary Force, Bishop of Khartoum.

I.—THE MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WAR . 3

By the Rev. Canon Frederick B. Macnutt, M.A., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Command, Canon of Southwark and Vicar of St. Matthew's, Surbiton.

FAITH

II.—FAITH IN THE LIGHT OF WAR . . . 35

By the Rev. F. R. Barry, M.A., D.S.O., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division, Fellow and Lecturer in Theology, Oriel College, Oxford.

III.—BELIEFS EMPHASISED BY THE WAR . 71

By the Rev. F. W. Worsley, B.D., Chaplain to the Forces, Chaplain-in-Charge of the Chaplains' School, Sub-Warden of St. Michael's College, Llandaff.

FELLOWSHIP

PAGE

IV.—FELLOWSHIP IN THE CHURCH . . . 99

By the Rev. Canon M. Linton Smith, D.S.O., D.D., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division, Hon. Canon of Liverpool Cathedral, Rector of Winwick, Lancashire, and Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Liverpool.

V.—FELLOWSHIP IN INDUSTRIAL LIFE . 125

By the Rev. Bernard W. Keymer, M.A., Chaplain to the Forces, —— Infantry Brigade, and R.F.C.; Vicar of Eastleigh, Hants.

VI.—MEMBERSHIP AND LOYALTY 147

By the Rev. Geoffrey Gordon, M.A., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division; formerly Assistant Curate of St. Margaret's, Westminster.

WORSHIP

VII.—WORSHIP AND SERVICES 175

By the Rev. E. Milner-White, M.A., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division, Chaplain of King's College, Cambridge.

VIII.—WORSHIP AND SERVICES 213

By the Rev. Canon C. Salisbury Woodward, M.C., M.A., Late Chaplain to the Forces, —— Brigade, Canon of Southwark, Rector of St. Saviour's with St. Peter's, Southwark.

PAGE

IX.—INSTRUCTION IN PRAYER 239

By the Rev. Marcell W. T. Conran, M.C., M.A., Late Chaplain to the Forces, —— Brigade, etc., Society of St. John the Evangelist, Cowley, Oxford.

EDUCATION

X.—THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY . . 269

By the Rev. Neville S. Talbot, M.C., M.A., Assistant Chaplain-General —— Army, Late Fellow and Chaplain of Balliol College, Oxford.

XI.—RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY . . . 291

By the Rev. T. W. Pym, D.S.O., M.A., Deputy Assistant Chaplain-General, —— Corps; Chaplain of Trinity College, Cambridge.

GENERAL

XII.—PERSONAL RELIGION IN CHURCH LIFE 319

By the Ven. Henry K. Southwell, C.M.G., M.A., Assistant Chaplain-General, —— Army; Archdeacon of Lewes.

XIII.—MAN TO MAN 335

By the Rev. Canon James O. Hannay, M.A. ("George A. Birmingham"), Late Chaplain to the Forces, Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

PAGE

XIV.—THE SOLDIER'S RELIGION 349

By the Rev. Philip C. T. Crick, M.A., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division; Fellow and Dean of Clare College, Cambridge; Examining Chaplain to the Archbishop of York.

XV.—THE RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTIES OF THE PRIVATE SOLDIER 375

By the Rev. J. Studdert-Kennedy, M.C., M.A., Chaplain to the Forces, —— Brigade; Vicar of St. Paul's, Worcester.

XVI.—WHEN THE PRIESTS COME HOME . . 409

By the Rev. Kenneth E. Kirk, M.A., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division; Tutor and Lecturer of Keble College, Oxford; Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Sheffield.

XVII.—THE GREAT ADVENTURE 429

By the Rev. Edward S. Woods, M.A., Senior Chaplain to the Forces, Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst; Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Durham.

PREFACE

By the Right Rev. LLEWELLYN H. GWYNNE, C.M.G., D.D.

Deputy Chaplain-General of the British Expeditionary Force : Bishop of Khartoum.

PREFACE

In writing a preface to this collection of Essays by Army Chaplains, I want to emphasise one train of thought which is apparent throughout, and, if possible, to explain and give the right value to it.

Discontent is a characteristic of the British race and is often our peculiar way of expressing a desire for improvement. We acknowledge grudgingly anything really good in our constitution.

During the Russo-Japanese War, a British Officer, attached to the Japanese Army, was much impressed with the wholehearted way in which the Japanese had mobilised their resources and perfected their equipment, and he compared unfavourably the unpreparedness of our own Army for any great emergency. This he expressed to a Japanese Officer, who knew England well and replied with a smile: "When the English cease to be discontented with themselves, that will be the sign of their decline and fall."

Our Empire rose to meet the great occasion in 1914, and created the war machine which is the wonder and admiration of our Allies, and the dismay of our enemies. The Germans are reported to boast, as one of their achievements in this war, that they have taught the

English to fight ; and this I suppose is partly true. Our machinery of war has been brought into being to counter the machinery of war our enemies had prepared for years in order to subdue Europe. Rapidly we assimilated their inventions and improved on their machinery ; otherwise we could not have reached the strong position we hold to-day.

As will be seen in the following Essays, our Chaplains, who are part and parcel of this fighting machine, and, according to the highest military authorities, a real asset to our fighting forces, have studied the stages of development and the inner working of this engine of war.

This knowledge has given them dreams and visions of a great spiritual fighting machine, which, if realised, may overcome the spiritual foes of humanity—the cause of all wars—and allow the Kingdom of God to operate upon earth.

In almost every stage of the development of our military machine, they have seen a parallel to what the stages of the creation of a true Church Militant might be ; namely, a discontent with the present disorder and confusion ; a realisation of our present faulty intelligence of the task before us, and of our indefinite grasp of our true objective ; and the conviction that we must dare to scrap that which is out of date and effete in our methods, so as to be able to mobilise and unify the enormous Christian resources now lying dormant.

This vision of a comprehensive spiritual Church Militant is not confined to Chaplains, and there are many of our military leaders and other soldiers of all

ranks, who have been the great factors in bringing into being our mighty Army, who have caught sight of the vision of a Church of Christ, catholic enough both to transcend all our different points of view and to comprehend the moods, tempers, and tastes of the different races who have gone to make up the English-speaking peoples of the world. These men have come to see that nothing short of the firm grip of this ideal can undertake an effective offensive against the powerful forces of evil which will still threaten humanity long after this war is over.

These Essays, which express the personal opinion of some of the most able Chaplains in France, have reached a short distance on the way to realisation of the great vision. They are, as far as the Church of England is concerned, chiefly directed toward clearing the ground, and I feel sure that other Churches are doing the same. I firmly believe that the discontent to which they give expression is not a sign of weakness, but, on the contrary, a sign that we are willing to face the facts. Let us watch and pray that out of the fire of this great war we may emerge cleansed and purified of the dross, to start afresh with bigger ideas and larger hopes, not content with any lesser objective than that aimed at and prayed for by the Unseen but Ever-present Commander of our forces, the extension of the Rule and Kingdom of God on earth. "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven."

LLEWELLYN H. GWYNNE,
Bishop, Deputy-Chaplain-General.

FRANCE,
September, 1917.

I

THE MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WAR

By the Rev. FREDERICK B. MACNUTT, M.A.

Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Command; Canon-Residentiary of Southwark Cathedral; Vicar of St. Matthew's, Surbiton.

Author of "Advent Certainties," "The Inevitable Christ," "The Reproach of War," &c.

NOTE

THE following Essay includes some passages from a sermon preached by the writer at the Consecration of the Bishop of Peterborough in Westminster Abbey on St. Matthew's Day, 1916, and soon afterwards printed in the *Guardian* and other Church papers under the title, "The Moral Equivalent of War."

The phrase, "Moral Equivalent of War," is derived (as will be seen on page 6) from William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Lecture XV. In a later work, *Memories and Studies*, XI., the same writer renewed his search for "a substitute for war's disciplinary function," and for militarism as "the great preserver of our ideals of hardihood." Instead of military conscription he proposes "a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against Nature." "Such a conscription," he thought, "would preserve in the midst of a pacific civilisation the manly virtues which the military party is so afraid of seeing disappear in peace."

The *Hibbert Journal* for January, 1917, contains an article by Mr. Harold Begbie entitled "National Training, the Moral Equivalent of War." The value of Mr. Begbie's ideas of education may be gathered from his contentions that "the State needs morality but not a religion," that religion should be rigidly excluded from all State schools, that "no parent ought to be allowed to interfere," and that "the business of the minister of religion is not with the school, but with the world that waits for the child when the door of the school closes upon it." It is no surprise to discover behind such notions of national training the Prussian conception of a State which acknowledges no authority above itself, and finds no place for God.

I

THE MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WAR

During many months of war-experience I have often tried to discover what impressions were being most deeply recorded upon my mind. At first all was chaos. To go up into the line straight from an English parish, reasonably secure from the dangers and horrors of war-time, is to be plunged into surroundings where for a time at least the personal equation has a quite undue importance. It is so near death, and it is so hard to die, not for one's own sake so much as for those one must leave behind. But gradually there comes a change. A man begins to feel the relative insignificance even of this which touches him most nearly. There are other things which far outweigh his own value to his people at home. Are there not tens of thousands just like himself, with home-folk to whom they are equally dear, and much more likely to be killed than the padre, whose risks, though often very real, are so much less than theirs? There is duty, there is service, there is his job; and these are much greater things than the preservation of his life. Presently there begins to dawn upon him a new conception of his work. He becomes a soldier, and

puts first things first. He has broken away from security and comfort, and there are times when he longs for them as he longs for nothing else, and loathes with a bitter hatred the confusion of blood and dirt which life has now become. But with wondering surprise he discovers that there are compensations, and that he has found something he never knew before. A new sense of emancipation lights up a new cheerfulness inside him, and he feels a strange freedom from care. Deep down in his soul—if he thinks it out—he knows that this is due to the fact that he is learning the meaning of utter self-devotion to something larger than his own interests, and that he is free because of it. Suddenly perhaps, as a Christian, he finds himself placing this new freedom and what lies behind it into contrast with the life of religion as he has lived it in the past and as most men live it in their safe, comfortable Church life at home. And that starts a series of new impressions which gradually shape themselves into a living whole. Veils drop, and vistas open, and voices are speaking. This is the true life, lived now in a setting of death, but life as it might be and ought to be lived always and everywhere and in every setting. That one certainty becomes a tribunal to which he brings all experience to be tried and tested, and in view of it he understands a thousand things which had always baffled him. Most of all he finds it judging the Church as he knows it, and himself as its minister in days that now look strangely remote and far away.[1]

[1] In generalising upon the Church I mean throughout this Essay the whole body of its baptised members. Of these there are very many to whom much that I have written does not apply; but,

It is that contrast which is to me the outstanding impression of the Front. The contrast between the heights to which men, generally unconsciously, rise in the pursuit of duty—the self-giving, the sacrifice, the whole-souled service of the Army, and all the "happy valiancy" and freedom to dare the impossible which go with them—and the cold, calculating, uninspired profession of Christianity which forms so large a part of the practical religion of the Church. The contrast between the pusillanimous caution and diplomatic casuistry with which we Churchmen have been accustomed to face our great problems, and the stern grip of realities which sets its face to take Bapaume or Messines, and starts out to do it because it ought to be done, and demands of men who are ready for anything that they shall give themselves as the price of doing it. The contrast of the high-sounding phrases of our militant hymns and ecclesiastical discussions and the flabby irresolution of our plans and actions for the Kingdom of God, when compared with the unself-conscious heroism of our fighting-men who talk so little about their ideals and so gloriously fulfil them, as if to translate ideals into action were not only natural but inevitable. To feel that contrast is to find oneself questioning whether war, as the militarists claim, in spite of all its detestable and nameless horrors, does not provoke the finest expression of human goodness of which men are capable.

being a minority, they do not determine the state of the Church as an actual corporate society, which is what I have in mind. Nor do they, to its great loss, at present determine its policy and action. In this direction self-government, when it comes, will work far-reaching changes.

I.

One autumn evening up at Ypres in 1915, after one of those poignant days which come to all Chaplains in the line, when I had buried four officers of the battalion I love best, the post brought me my copy of a weekly journal. I sat outside my tent, dumb and rebellious " and as it were a beast before Thee," till turning over the pages I came across a passage from William James. It occurs, as I have since discovered, in the lecture in " The Varieties of Religious Experience " in which he discusses Asceticism as a type of Saintliness, and finds in it strong elements of likeness to the spirit of War " as a school of strenuous life and heroism." " One hears," he says, " of the mechanical equivalent of heat. What we now need to discover in the social realm is the moral equivalent of war : something heroic that will speak to men as universally as war does, and yet will be as compatible with their spiritual selves as war has proved itself to be incompatible."[1] These words were to me then, and ever since have been, like the pulling up of the blinds in a dark house. The philosopher had got a fast hold of reality, though he suggests only tentatively what his " moral equivalent " is to be. " I have often thought," he goes on to say, " that in the old monkish poverty-worship, in spite of the pedantry which infested it, there might be something like that moral equivalent of war which we are seeking. May not voluntarily

[1] " The Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 367. See the Note at the beginning of the Essay.

accepted poverty be 'the strenuous life,' without the need of crushing weaker peoples ? "

There is no thought of " crushing weaker peoples " in the British Army : the spirit of our cause is utterly foreign to it. Our problem is rather, as all of us know, to break the tremendous power of a highly organised nation which aspires to stamp out human liberties under its own iron heel. But that does not affect the contention that asceticism and war alike have a peculiar power to call out and to develop human capacities which for the most part have been only latent in the vast mass of civilised mankind in an age which has made consistently for money-grabbing and selfishness and for the supremacy of material interests. Voluntary poverty, or the free choice of doing without a great deal which has seemed vital to well-being, would surely lead to " the liberation from material attachments, the unbribed soul, the manlier indifference, the paying our way by what we are and do and not by what we have, the right to fling away our life at any moment irresponsibly—the more athletic trim, in short, the moral fighting shape."[1] It is a great challenge which the distinguished psychologist thus throws down—one can imagine him, if he were with us still, renewing it with all the force which it must have now in the light of three years of such a war as this is—to all who care for the highest interests of men to discover some way by which they may be raised to their highest levels without climbing thither with hands bathed in human blood.

Is there a way ? That for us Churchmen is the

[1] *Ibid*, p. 368.

question of questions to-day. I felt that then as I sat reading the words, while the shells came desolately moaning overhead and falling upon Poperinghe, bursting with the familiar thud which may mean death or mutilation for somebody, or falling into the anti-climax of silence which proclaims the dud and seldom fails to provoke the jeering witticism of the British Tommy at the expense of German iron-foundries. And I have often felt it since in another connection. The contrast which I outlined above is not less startling than another which reading the New Testament forces upon the troubled conscience of a Chaplain on active service. I mean the contrast between the Christian life, as the Gospels and Epistles describe it, and the life of the average Churchman in our twentieth-century world. From one point of view he is thankful for it; from another it covers him with confusion and shame. He has never been so thankful for the New Testament as now, when he reads it with a new sense of the utter, glorious reality of what it contains; but the measure of the new meaning which the commentary of experience (better than the best of the books of his theological masters) has given to it is the measure of his shame for the way in which he shares the Church's failure as a whole to reproduce its life and spirit to-day. It is no depressed pessimism which makes him feel this, but rather insight born of contact established through the medium of vital experience with the first and original expression of Christianity in the writings of the Apostles and with the glaring facts of life on the edge of death where men and Churchmanship are seen as they are. If

that is pessimism, then welcome every pessimist into the councils of the Church, and all power to his elbow as he smites hard for God.

Think for a moment of what we have seen since August, 1914, in the response of the nation to the demands of war. The war record of England is not without its ugly phases ; but it overflows with wonders which, none the less because they are our daily commonplaces, can never fail to make it the richest and most inspiring tradition in our history. The call of national necessity, the splendid comradeship of service on behalf of all that makes life moral and spiritual and lifts it above a godless chaos that is ruled by brute force, the high romance of giving self away for the more-than-self which is the background of all idealism and religion, the breaking in upon smooth easy living of a sudden demand for sacrifice—these things have been a trumpet-blast to the soul of the English people during these past three years. Men who once appeared to be absorbed in trivialities have ridden off into the unknown with " a great glory at heart that none can take away," [1] and heroism which seemed to have vanished from the earth has looked at us again out of quiet shining English eyes, splendidly unconscious of anything but that it is fine and yet quite natural to venture all at the call of duty. We have seen the smaller interests of the State merged in the great flood of patriotism, and the partisan loyalties of political life, while not abolished, yet certainly subordinated to the higher demands of national service. Almost everywhere we have heard a new spirit of self-devotion

[1] Robert Bridges.

confessing the obligation to give one's share, however small, to the whole effort of the nation. How different it has all been, and still is, from the deadly inertia of the past!

And this in a higher degree still is what we clergy have witnessed who have followed our men out here to minister to them, as far as in us lies, the help which religion can give them in failure or victory to be worthy of their vocation, and to do their duty, whether in life or in death. We have lived in closest comradeship with the young subaltern who used only to think of his silk socks and the shape of his felt hat, his bank-account and his revels; and we have seen him changed into the platoon commander who thinks of everything but himself, and is ready at any moment to fling his life away in the doing of some deed of service for his men. We have mixed daily with the hard-bitten coal-miner or factory-worker from the North, whose language would set an iceberg on fire, or the rough labourer from some "haunt of ancient peace" in rural England, with a head as hard as the sun-baked clay in which he digs trenches in summer to resist a counter attack. They seemed in old days incapable of anything but rebelliously or listlessly following the dull routine of daily work with its parentheses of often gross or lurid recreations. But now we know what fortitude and chivalry, courage and charity, fidelity and devotion lay waiting beneath the forbidding surface for the demand which has made them the magnificent men we have seen fighting in the trenches, marching up to the attack and booking orders for Hun helmets, or almost invisible in the white

bandages which swathe their tortured bodies in Casualty Clearing Stations or Base Hospitals.

Let no one think that we padres have come to believe in the British Expeditionary Force as a short cut to sanctity. There is another side to the picture, and it is not bright. A man is not a saint because he proves himself to be a hero; and there are more heroes than saints in the Army by a very long way. But every hero has at least some of the qualities of sainthood, and shows that he is of the stuff whereof God fashions His saints, when it yields itself to the shaping. And, for all their faults, many of these men are so much nearer sainthood than the many members of the Church who have felt the pressure of the great hand and have failed to take its impress, and yet mistake themselves for the finished product.

Now it is precisely these great changes of spirit and outlook upon life which we have witnessed since the outbreak of war that the Church exists to manifest and to kindle always and everywhere among men in their relations to one another, and above all in their relations to God. It is these very things which Christ claimed from His disciples, and Himself revealed in His life and death. Christianity has always demanded for Jesus Christ and His kingdom the whole-hearted devotion and self-sacrifice which men are now giving for their country. The unity which is felt under the constraint of danger and flows naturally out of loyalty to the nation is a living image of the unity which is to spring from loyalty to Him, absorbing and including in itself all lesser attachments and more partial affinities

and sympathies. The courage which attempts the seemingly impossible, the great romance of riding out through danger to break an evil power and to win freedom for the oppressed, are the inner secrets of His own most glorious Cross and Passion. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me," "He that taketh not up his cross and followeth after Me cannot be My disciple." As we send our sons and brothers overseas, we bow our heads and confess that it would be keener pain to keep them, if they made the great refusal, than to give them up to do their duty, even at the cost of death.

> Not ours to urge you, or to know the voice;
> No stern decree you followed or obeyed;
> Nothing compelled your swift unerring choice,
> Except the stuff of which your dreams were made,
> To that high instinct passionately true,
> Your way you knew.[1]

Think of all that, and then set over against it the actual Church as we know it in its war with sin. Does the picture suggest that we are revealing to the world that we possess in Christianity the moral equivalent for war which the philosopher sets out to discover?

II.

He is no true lover of Christ and His Church who whines and complains when he hears men speak of the Church's failure. To recognise it is the only possible attitude for faith. It is too far-reaching to be lightly glossed over with complacent dreams about the magnitude of a Church revival, which, whatever it has done,

[1] *Punch*, May 10, 1916.

has failed to win the great masses of British manhood in the armies now in the field. Our sense of failure will be in proportion both to our vision of the possibilities of the Kingdom of God and to our sense of the splendour of what active service has called forth, where the Church has largely failed to do it, in the lives and characters of these men. One could wish that every comfortable optimist in the Church at home had to pass through three months' experience with a Brigade at the Front. If he were really serious and devout he would go back to worship in his parish church a wiser and a better Churchman. Perhaps if the fact of the war itself, with its revelation of the weakness of the Church as a factor in determining international relationships, had brought him no heart-searchings and cross-questionings, contact with the men who are dying for the future of humanity would convince him that something is wrong with the Society of Jesus which has not won their faith and service, and has not even impressed upon them the elementary meaning of what it stands for in the world.

We Churchmen are not likely to forget how much the nation owes to the Church, and how much more it is than some of our rather shallow critics are willing to confess. We know how deep a desire there is stirring in the Church's heart that it should more worthily translate its faith into action and fulfil its mission to the nation as the Body of Christ. We have seen thought and prayer at work everywhere in the National Mission of Repentance and Hope among men of very various convictions and attachments, and we believe that the tide of hope and desire is rising. But all

this will only make the Christian realist more ready to recognise failure where he sees it, and to set himself to discover its causes. There is no question of ultimate and absolute failure, for that the Church need never fear. It cannot as a body come to utter ruin, for it is founded upon the Risen Christ, and its life is His own immortal life Who " must reign till all His enemies are put under His feet." But the Church as an actual human society can fail, and has failed, relatively to its opportunities and to the tasks and duties which it exists to discharge for mankind. If anyone doubts that, let him come out here, or at least let him read without prejudice some of the Essays which follow in this book. That the long centuries of Christianity in England have impressed their influence upon the English people, just as a good man (or more still a number of good men) will inevitably touch and uplift any society in which he moves, no one can doubt. A good mother will never fail to leave her imprint upon her sons, however far away they may drift from her discipline and teaching ; but she will be the first to acknowledge failure, if they grow up to manhood largely indifferent to what she strove to give them and what she tried to make them in their youth. Why are the vast majority of the men who compose our armies almost completely unconscious of any sense of fellowship with the Church of their Baptism ? Why is the religion of most soldiers so largely inarticulate that, as Donald Hankey has told us in " A Student in Arms," they fail to connect the good things which they do believe and practise in any way with Jesus Christ ? Why have they cast off what early teaching they had like garments which do not

fit them and for which they have no use? Why do they think that a Churchman is a man who professes to be better than they are, but is probably "as bad as I am and perhaps a good deal worse," as one Tommy bluntly said when discussing the Church? Some of our sturdy apologists in England seem to look upon those of us who ask these questions as gloomy Jeremiahs who are weary and overstrained by their work, shell-shocked prophets who it may be hoped will recover their balance when they get back to the soothing amenities of home.

To live in a fool's paradise is one of the least of an Army Chaplain's temptations. Nor do I think that as a body of clergy we suffer from an excess of pessimising fears. We have tested our message to the utmost, and it has borne the test. There are too many points of contact between the religion of the Church and our men to feel despondent about the future, if only we be found faithful and wise stewards of the heritage of God. But the one really impossible thing is to decline to face the facts. There is nothing that has a larger place and arouses keener interest in the discussions of chaplains when they are able to meet and to compare notes than the causes of the failure whose evidences are written large in the lives of the men in our Brigades and Hospitals. And there is a remarkable consensus of judgment among those who are most capable to speak. We have our freaks, of course, prophets of small things and private fads. Some of us are a long time in shedding our traditional predilections, and only move slowly to a clear sight of the large things that really matter. Some, I suppose, will return like

a dog to his vomit when we come home. But most of us agree completely about the main causes that lie behind the Church's failure to win British manhood, while varying standpoints will still lead to varying emphasis of other facts in our corporate life which few would claim to be of the same relative importance.

To trace some of the chief causes as I see them from the standpoint of the Army, I turn to the contrast, which I have stated above, between the nation at war and the Church engaged in its spiritual conflict. I assume that no Churchman who reads this Essay but will agree that we claim as a Church to possess "the moral equivalent" of the best that war has brought us as a nation. That commits us to the test. Can we bear it ?

(i) The most obvious cause of our failure is our faint-heartedness in face of the power of the foe whom we are fighting.

Christianity will never be a popular religion till Christ through His Church has beaten down evil in the age-long conflict which is expressed once for all in His Cross. Calvary is the epitome of Christian faith and Christian living, and Calvary is pure unmitigated war. The Cross is ever a scandal, to the Briton as to the Jew and the Greek. It stands up still between earth and heaven as the symbol of War which leads only through wounds and bloodshed to its destined close. The Lord Christ has given us no easy expectation of a swift campaign that marches to a speedy triumph over a broken enemy. But as He passed through apparent downfall to the victory of His Resurrection, so He calls us to follow Him in every battle in which He joins issue with the powers of darkness, through many a vicissitude

of failure, to the final issue of victory and peace. Far off, perhaps, lies the latest struggle when He will enter the last strongholds of sin. And meanwhile not every setback of His army is due to lack of faith and courage; for where there is conflict there must be action and reaction, attack and counter-attack, till the decision has come. This is the alphabet of Christian warfare.

But, all this being so, can the Church, as it looks out over its battle-fields to-day, declare to its divine Leader that it is fighting as He did and in the spirit of His Cross? So often yielding ground to a hostile offensive, has it a right to throw all the responsibility for its defeats upon the world? Can it claim that it has rallied to His call when its every regiment is full of men who have long ago lost heart or never had a battle-heart at all? "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." If every coward in the Church's army, to say nothing of deserters, were to be spiritually court-martialled and shot for cowardice in face of the enemy, there would be very few full battalions left with which to carry on. And some of our gaitered generals and colonels would certainly have to face the firing-party.

(ii) In nothing does the contrast between the Church and the nation in arms stand out more distinctly than when we bring them to the touchstone of Romance.

The uninitiated observer of the British soldier, accepting that puzzling person's own description of himself, may well fail to trace the presence of any strong dramatic impulse or inspiration in his attitude to the war and its meaning. He groans and grouses, is fed up to the teeth, and often seems to desire one

thing only, and that is to go home. But watch him going up to an attack, and, discount all you may for battle-fever, you will soon find out your mistake. Ask him whether he would go back to Blighty and leave his pals in the lurch to fight it out. Ask him whether, if he had the choice, he would sacrifice all that has been done and suffered to the desire for an immediate peace. There would be romance in his answer ; not the gilded caricature of sensational fiction, nor the lyrical rapture of the poet's lofty dream,—if you were not an officer he would probably swear and ask who you were getting at—but the pure romance of a high purpose, shot through and through with the glory of devotion, not less real because almost subconscious and unable to express itself except in deeds. That is the stuff of which our war-romance is woven, and it is of a fabric and a pattern fit to be hung in the palaces of memory for all the generations that are to come.

And then over against that we set the conventionalism of our Church life, and the drab absorption in petty activities and trivialities which we have hung up as our ideals of service in the Temple of God. There is still many a church in England where religion sits in home-spun and is fair to see. But Christianity was intended for the wide world's arena ; it is helmed and girded for the quick encounter ; it sends out its knights and men-at-arms to battle. And we know little of that, its high venture, amidst the smooth orderliness or the petty disorder of the Church of to-day. We have been established into inertia and inanity ; and what wonder that we do not win the hearts of men who respond and find themselves only when you make a

great demand upon them to give their all for what they feel to be well worth it? We fail because we pitch our appeal too low. We make it easy to be a Churchman, and men answer that it is not worth while.

(iii) Closely related to this lack of Romance is the fact that the spirit of the defensive rather than the spirit of the offensive dominates us as a Church.

"Christianity," says Mr. Clutton Brock, "has lost its power of coherence, its joy, its power of laughter, because it has been merely on the defensive." There we stand, entrenched in our carefully fortified lines which cover the narrow territory we are holding on to, without the strategic initiative that goes with victory. We are afraid—so many of us—to take risks and make history, afraid to think imperially in the cause of the Kingdom of God, afraid of all the reconstruction and enterprise that must go with war. We rely upon apology, and dreading the disasters which might follow frontal attacks upon deeply-entrenched evils, we strafe them from a distance with long-range fire. Timid and divided counsels, which would bring certain failure on the Somme or at Arras, first limit and then wreck our schemes for progress and reform. We have grown contented, or are only feebly discontented, with our limitations, and year after year we settle down in our trenches for another winter, satisfied if only we can keep the enemy out.

"Never," writes the notorious popular exponent of German militarism, "was there a religion more combative than Christianity."[1] He does not realise that

[1] Bernhardi, "Germany and the Next War," p. 29.

the sword which Christ brought on earth has its point levelled at the heart of the creed he preaches, and that the fire which he feels in Jesus is a fire that must presently consume it. But it is a non-combatant Church, in the spiritual sense, which makes it possible for his distortions of Christ's meaning to deceive his followers. Christ means us to be "the salt of the earth," and few of us have any real conception of what that would mean if it were translated into terms of modern life. The Church in its best days has always been a centre of disturbance in an evil world, and we disturb little, because we are too politic and wise. Instead of concentrating upon great aims, we tidy up the irregularities of our organisation. When some daring soul bids us "go over the top" and express our religion in terms of our own time, we shiver with apprehension because it might mean that some powerful section of the Church would threaten to betake itself to the wilderness or sullenly cut off financial supplies. Mr. H. G. Wells tells us that "the Church has not the courage of its Creeds"; and he is right, because we either handle them so timidly that we are easily despoiled of them, or care for them so little that we give them away to every new demand of the modern mind. We are easily fooled because we are tepid in our allegiance, and feebly permit almost unlimited denials because we hardly know what we believe. And so we are either the easy victims of the German spirit of destruction, or happy slaves of dead traditions who have never learned to breathe the fresh air of apostolic faith. The German armies would be in London to-day if these had been the methods and

this the spirit in which the nation had faced the tasks and trials of the great war.

(iv) Membership in a Church which thus fails in fighting-spirit must needs mean little, and for a vast body of its members loyalty to it will imply but small demands upon love and devotion. The fellowship which it offers will inspire little fruitful co-operation, and will know nothing of the quick thrill of comradeship which is "knit together in one communion" through sacrifice and enthusiasm for a great cause. It will be lacking in that love, strong as death, for a trusted leader which does not easily decline, as we do, to the low levels of partisan attachments and exclusive sectional loyalties.

"The Army," says the first of the "King's Regulations and Orders for the Army," "is composed of those who have undertaken a definite liability for service." It is one of the root causes of our failures that, while this is true of the Church also, it is a liability which is not recognised by more than the comparatively few. "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Not a Church which in Baptism enlists men for a lifelong warfare, and allows the majority of them to pass into a permanent reserve which is never called up for active service. Not a Church which is a spiritual parallel to pre-war politics, where patriotism was buried under the rubbish-heaps of party-programmes, and had lost the sense of the whole State in contending for the lop-sided development of its parts. It was not to be a Church which grudgingly and tardily recognises and

uses the private soldier and non-commissioned officer, but relies almost entirely upon an officer-class, not lacking in devotion, but singularly unable, because largely untrained, to lead and inspire the man in the ranks, and, because it allows him to think that little is expected of him, secures only what it expects. It was to be a Church whose chief characteristic is a unity based upon the possession of a unifying life, which grows and progresses through antagonism with a hostile world, instead of spending its energies upon a suicidal clash of opposites within itself. It was not to be broken up into rival forces, each acting for itself, with an almost total disregard of discipline, carrying out its operations without reference to any general plan of campaign. Its Bases were not to be thronged with men who wear its uniform but refuse to go up into the line. The trains in France move very slowly up to the fighting front; they move more slowly still in the Church. But in the one case this is the result of the pressure of traffic due to a constant offensive; while in the other it is brought about by the blockages which disorder and inefficiency are continually causing on the lines, and by the lack of initiative which leaves us content to carry on without urgency and eagerness the slow and perfunctory operations of our half-hearted campaigns.

III.

It would be easy to follow out this contrast into further detail, especially in connection with the more commonly recognised causes which lie behind the failures of the Church as they stand revealed by the war. Selfish-

ness, indolence, timeserving, and worldliness of spirit have each their contrast in military life. More obvious still is lack of discipline, the most distinctive quality developed by active service in the Army and the most conspicuous by its absence in the Church. Who can estimate the increase in our fighting-value, if the self-subordination and sense of obligation which are paramount in the soldier could be reproduced and spiritualised in the average Churchman ?

But already some who read this Essay will suspect me of such a militarising of temper and conception that it has led me to overlook the fact that religion is far too great a thing to be truthfully, or at least completely, described in terms of any human activity or organisation whatever. There are, I know, many points at which the analogy which I have been pressing completely breaks down. For one thing, there can be no conscripts in God's Church. For another, religious experience can never be clothed merely in the imagery of war ; it has depths and heights where peace and not war alone can express it. The true " moral equivalent of war " will in many ways be utterly unwarlike, and the devotee of militarism will find himself hopelessly baffled if he attempts to find it only on the levels of war.

No militarising of the Church on the side of mere organisation will ever make it that " Church militant here on earth " which it must really become if it is to fulfil its divine mission and meet the demands that the tremendous needs of men are making upon it now. But here still the military parallel helps us, and points the way to a solution of our difficulties. The most important fact about an army is neither its organisation nor its equip-

ment; the very soul and secret of its victories is its morale. Without a high morale munitions and guns are all useless. And here we arrive at the crucial point of this discussion. Unless this is to be only another of the many purely destructive criticisms of the Church to which we have been treated *ad nauseam* since the war began, modern Books of Lamentations whose authors are mourners beforehand for a moribund cause, it must point out a way of renewal which will meet the causes of failure with their antidote and deal with them, as a good general, when he feels himself being outfought, draws upon his resources for the means for changing defeat into victory.

With the Church as with the Army the greatest of our problems are really problems of morale. Morale is the fruit of spirit, and it is spirit more than anything else in which we are lacking. Our armies and munitions out here are the product of British spirit, and according as the barometer of that spirit has risen or fallen during these past three years has been our progress towards winning the war. It is spirit which discovers resources and draws upon them; it is spirit which develops the qualities of leadership in those who possess them; it is spirit which finds ways and means and then puts them to use. Spirit is the one really creative force in the world. Change the spirit of the Church, and all else will follow. All great religious movements have been due to spirit and personality. We need not mechanism but motive-power, or rather both as the creation of spirit, which broods over the chaos of failure, and setting its divine energies to work calls forth from the formless deeps the organisms into which

it breathes the breath of life. Schemes of reform and self-government, re-statements or re-interpretations of doctrines and creeds, programmes of social and educational improvement, movements towards unity—we have debated these without realising that they are all equally valueless unless they are the expression of life. Many of them have been stillborn because they were mere ecclesiastical contrivances rather than the fruition of an intense life. Faith, hope, and love are creative forces, which must needs find an outlet and scope for self-realisation. Everything else runs at last back up into that.

But spirit needs arousing, or it may lie dormant and inactive. That was our state as a nation before the call of war came, and slowly and surely we were stirred out of our sleep. That is our state as a Church still, with signs and promises that we are beginning to awake. It will be the dawning of a great day for the Church of England when as a body it hears and responds to the call to war.

That call is sounding now for all who have ears to hear it, and, like the call which came to England in 1914, it is the call of a great and pressing danger. The Church has never been slow to rally to the defence of its schools and its endowments, and to defend itself against attacks in these and like directions. But there is a danger now which goes far deeper than the mere loss of opportunities and equipment. The cause of Christ hangs in the balance. The issues are joined. We know that for the Church, as far as we are concerned, it is now or never. If once this period of upheaval passes, and the new world which is now in the making builds

itself upon foundations which are as hostile or indifferent to Christ and His Church as were the foundations of the age which has gone down in ruins, the future of the Church in this and its succeeding generation will be an unutterable darkness. There will never be lacking those who, like others before them, will hand on the torch of light to after-generations ; and the time will come at last when the Church will become Christian enough to be made the instrument through which Christ will come to His own among men. But for us, we shall have failed ; and as a Church we shall correspond to what England would have been among the nations, if in the hour of her trial and danger she had chosen the easy path of safety which so quickly would have proved to be the path to downfall. The Church cannot be neutral without working its own undoing. " Because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation."

Thus in this time of the Church's testing there are certainly some of the elements of a spiritual equivalent to the facts which determined the attitude of England in her decision to make war. We like the nation have all the resources for achieving a glorious issue, if we will use them. We have laid upon us the demand of a cause which is worth the sacrifice of everything to carry it through its ordeal, for we believe that with its success or failure are bound up the destinies of each successive generation. It needs only that we should have the faith, first to call each other to battle, and then to go on to deeds and the payment of the price. Have we the spirit ? It all depends in the long run upon that. How did the Church of the early days conquer the Roman Empire, and from being one insignificant sect among

many win steadily forward till it openly mastered the old gods and drove them from their thrones? "If I may invent or adapt three words," says Mr. T. R. Glover, "the Christian 'out-lived the pagan,' 'out-died' him, and 'out-thought' him."[1] And so, from our point of view we may add, he "out-fought" him. He had "the courage of his creeds." He put Christ first, and everything else afterwards, or in comparison with Him nowhere at all. He was a better man because he served a better Lord. He valued Him and His Kingdom at a higher price than the possession of life itself. He put into his religion every resource of heart and mind and will of which he was capable. And so he won his battle, and the warrior Church of those days, following Him "Who goes forth conquering and to conquer," achieved the most wonderful triumph in religious history. So must we. So can we. "Deus vult." But if so, we Churchmen must take our religion as seriously as England has taken this war.

I have spoken of spirit as being of the very essence of morale, and of the lack of spirit in the Church as a corporate society living its life and doing its work among men. "Change the spirit of the Church and all else will follow." That leads us beyond the limits of our military analogy into the region where faith is accustomed to think of the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and of the Church as a spiritual body, created and sustained by the Spirit of God. These divine facts gain fresh meaning and force when we view them in the light of what we have been thinking. There need be, there can be, no lasting failure where

[1] "The Jesus of History," p. 213.

that Spirit reigns supreme. We must make room for Him: we must give Him scope and freedom to act. He is fire, and we must let Him scorch and consume our hypocrisies and shams. He is light, and we must follow His guidance, translating into deeds and facts the impulses moving within us which we so often allow to die, because we do not permit them to pass first into policy and then into act. He is Love, and Love is devotion and sacrifice like His "Who through the Eternal Spirit offered up Himself without spot to God." He is Life, and "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us." All our problems are problems of the Spirit, and we can solve them all if He equips and inspires and leads us forth to war.

The directions in which the Spirit is leading the Church in this great crisis of our life can only be discovered by the collective wisdom of a Church which really sets itself with a new energy of determination and enterprise to find out and to do the Will of God. But some things seem already to stand out clear and distinct.

(i) We must claim at all costs the right to self-government, or rather the right to fulfil our duty to live the life to which Christ calls us in modern England. It may be that in making that claim we may be forced to sacrifice a great deal, and to encounter opposition which can only be overcome by surrendering the dubious advantages of an Establishment which, however much it is worth, is not vital, and is of incomparably less value than liberty to be true to ourselves and true to our Lord.

(ii) We must make an end of our present chaotic sectionalism, and in the spirit of a larger loyalty to Christ attain to some solid agreement upon what membership in the Church of England really demands both in faith and practice. We must reach some settlement, not narrowed in the interests of party, and not the result of facile compromise, but the expression of common faith and common life. I believe that the new responsibilities involved in the possession of self-government, and the possible imminence of rupture attended by the frightful evils waiting upon a further rending apart of Churchmen, will teach many of us that a great deal which we have hotly contended for is due more to custom and heredity and our traditional separation into rival camps than to necessary allegiance to essential Truth. As with the nation in the early days of the war, a great common danger will reveal a deeper unity than we had suspected, and drawing the Church together in the face of threatened disaster will drive us perforce to put first things first in Churchmanship as we did in citizenship.

(iii) We must recognise the fact that the Church in England is a missionary Church, and no longer look upon ourselves as the nation regarded from an ecclesiastical point of view—a legal fiction which has done deadly hurt to the sense of obligation inspired by a clearly-recognised and defined membership. Recovering that, we shall recover also the missionary spirit.

(iv) We must give its right place in all our thinking to the great formative fact of the Kingdom of God. Only so can we escape from the parochialism of our present outlook; and the recognition of Christ's world-

wide Kingship will give a breadth and glory to our ideals and aims which will win the devotion and service of many who have been quite untouched by our lower and narrower appeals in the past.

(v) We must face our social evils in a new spirit, no longer regarding them with the mild uneasiness which evaporates in talk, but "with a permanently troubled conscience"[1] which will never rest till the Spirit of Christ has won expression for Himself through the whole system of our common social life.

(vi) Lastly, we must aim at the co-operation of all the Christian forces in the nation, and not only aim at it (aiming at things with us so often only means discussing), but take steps to secure it, demanding of others, and they of us, that if it is really necessary that reunion should come only at the end of a long movement, we shall at least be always on the move towards it, and be doing and thinking things which make steadily for the time when "they shall be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and the world shall believe that Thou hast sent Me."

It is on lines like these that the Church will reveal to the world its "moral equivalent of war." Have we the battle-heart to rally to His call Who "came not to bring peace but a sword," that is, peace only after victory? Only thus can we be worthy to claim for Him the faith and service of men who have learned the freedom which is his alone who believes that love of self is less than love of honour, and duty more than life itself. It means war; but it is war with all war's glory and without its horrors, because it is war to

[1] The Bishop of Oxford in a Church Congress sermon.

liberate men and not to enslave them, to build and not to destroy. War! whose weapon is not force but faith, whose motive is not the lust of gain but the love of souls; and wherever it passes it leaves behind it not broken homes, and shattered lives, and wasted wealth, but the enrichment of humanity in all its relations with the grace and fulness of God.[1]

[1] This Essay, as being introductory to a series of more or less closely related chapters, deliberately treats its subject only generally, even in the closing attempt to indicate directions for progress. I must refer the reader to the Essays which follow for an application of the Christian war-spirit, more in detail, to the questions with which they deal. But to illustrate the moral equivalent of war in the individual man's life, I should like to quote the following passage from a striking paper by the Rev. A. Herbert Gray, C.F. in "Chaplains in Council," a Report of a Conference of Chaplains (published by Edward Arnold), pp. 25–27:—"Fundamentally Christianity is a way of living ordinary life, and is not to begin with a mere matter either of abstinence or of attending church. A saved man, to Christ's thought, is a man living all day and every day in a certain way—the way of a disciple. He is not a man primarily concerned about his own soul. There is something selfish about that—which, by the way, Tommy sees quite clearly. He is primarily concerned about serving Christ. That means being a certain kind of employer and employee. It means doing business on certain unselfish and upright principles. It means a certain kind of home life. It means being a certain kind of husband, father, brother, and so on. It involves a certain exacting attitude to the poor and all sufferers. It means staying in the world and there proving yourself a good friend—a sociable, charitable person. It means keeping cheerful in trying circumstances. It means courage and endurance. It often means self-sacrifice and a measure of loneliness and opposition. It is so hard that it is ridiculously impossible to any man who is not daily sustained by the grace of God. . . . But it is also a great positive and glorious enterprise which entirely fills life, *and calls for all the greatest qualities of the human spirit*—the virile ones as well as the gentle ones. . . . We have appealed to men's fears . . . and men's emotions. . . . *But have we sufficiently appealed to men's latent heroism, to their capacity for self-sacrifice, to their readiness for a great adventure?* I doubt it. And until we do we cannot hope to win the average man."

II

FAITH IN THE LIGHT OF WAR

By the Rev. F. R. BARRY, M.A., D.S.O.

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II

FAITH IN THE LIGHT OF WAR

I.

FAITH IN THE LIGHT OF WAR.

A. Faith is a plant that flourishes in adversity. Like every other faculty it seems to reach its fullest development by reacting to resistance. It calls forth all its latent capacities to overcome an unfavourable environment. And such emphatically is War. It is untrue—as must be roundly stated from the outset—that War is a reviver of Religion. I had at one time a vague idea that it is so, but experience definitely confutes it. Indeed, if I may write quite personally, it has had for me the opposite result. It is for myself at any rate a constant struggle to keep the spiritual sense alive at all. It is only to be done by very great effort. The fatal step of "perfect adaptation" to surroundings is a death-trap which is always set. If this is so for the padre it is likely to be at least as much so for the soldier. And observation appears to bear this out. Most men, I believe, would give the same

report. The notion that the life of active service produces a kind of spiritual exaltation must rest on ignorance of its conditions. Every speck of glamour or romance has disappeared from warfare long ago: it is just an orgy of monotony. And (so far at least as I can observe) the combined circumstances of this life do distinctly make *against* Religion. The opposite view, so popular in pulpits, seems to be largely based on the sad tradition which associates Religion with "hard times." This is the typically British outlook which looks upon catastrophes and tragedies as in a special sense the acts of God—associating Him with "the King's enemies" as alone beyond the scope of a Lloyd's policy. So people speak of men as turning to God because they are always face to face with death. And we often hear that War is quite unrivalled for "putting the fear of God into a man." But surely it is a very anæmic faith which can only find its God in the abnormal, when every other hypothesis has failed. And the thought of being turned to God by fear seems to me extremely blasphemous.

And yet there is this much truth in the common view. Faith is, by its classical definition, "testing the reality of the Unseen."[1] The very weight of circumstances against it makes its challenge and its opportunity. And the collapse and failure of the seen may show the unseen in a clearer light. So, I think, it has been in these times. Everything visible has failed us, and we have been flung back on the Invisible. Sick with the horror of the merely actual we have turned with fresh inquiry to the Real. And Faith has

[1] Πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων.—Heb. xi. 1.

triumphed. Wherever it had before any genuine existence the sense of the Unseen has now been deepened.

As a matter of fact it appears to have been so always. Artists, poets, and philosophers—all who "commerce with Eternity"—normally find their conviction is not shaken but rather confirmed by the pressure of outward circumstance. Nearly all the greatest works of genius have been created in times of storm and stress. And it has not been less so with religion. The Psalms and Prophets, the *Phaedo*, the Apocalypse, the *Meditations* and the *Civitas Dei* are amongst the standing evidence of this. And the supreme example of all others is the dying word of Jesus—"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Through all the unplumbed darkness of those hours He could still hold fast the Father's hand. Now these verdicts of Faith's experts are immensely strengthening to us when we are faced with like conditions. For in these days we have to live very largely on the faith of other people. We have then here at once a vindication of the need for *institutional* religion. The Church can be regarded from other standpoints, some of which we shall see later on. But at present I would simply dwell on this, that a man's religion cannot stand alone. The individual's faith needs reinforcing by corporate and traditional experience. Only of course it can never be proved valid save by personal trial and assent. Each must make the venture for himself. And on the whole these are days of Faith's victories.

Of this there is a good deal of evidence. I cite first what may be called the rediscovery of the outlook of

the Prophets. Behind that cynical attitude to the war which so distresses you at home in your patriotic studies there is, I think, for most men here some vision of a spiritual interpretation. Many gibes, for example, have been spent on the fact that both sides offer prayer for victory. But they are really very superficial. Surely this is truly testimony to the faculty we are discussing —the sense that can discern an Arbiter over and behind our human conflicts, the faith that can see a Throne set up in Heaven. And there is, I think, a widespread feeling, even though it is not always articulate, that all the horror has, as we say, a meaning—that it is something more than 'merely bestial.' To the sensitive and highly educated it is rather like reading Shakesperian tragedy. There we can read, without pain or disgust, a drama which is packed with 'pity and fear' because we are lifted high above the facts to the ideal principles and laws of which they are the dreadful incarnation. I had an experience like this myself. My Brigade was fighting desperately on the Somme on September 26th and the two days following. On the 29th, worn out and atheistic and quite incapable of prayer, I began glancing at my prayer book. I shall never forget the rush of light that came with the Michaelmas 'Epistle.' The real war, after all, is the War in Heaven. And the dragon and his angels, and all the blood and misery and blindness—they are cast out at the last! God in the end is stronger than all else, and He is the only key to human history.

Unconsciously here I have passed from Prophecy to what, in the days when we discussed these things, was technically known as Apocalyptic. That is

significant. One can see out here that the sharp distinction we used to draw is extremely artificial. It is only in times of so-called Peace and Progress—when in our prosperity we say 'I shall never be removed'—that the Apocalyptic outlook is strange and alien. In these days we can enter into it. We can see it is merely calling in another world to redress the balance of the old—seeking a spiritual clue to history when history itself seems to have fallen in. Indeed to myself at least that kind of writing becomes more full of meaning every day. The conditions of one's life and work on service, where orderly development and planning are not ever to be looked for, where 'sufficient for the day' is a gospel and 'preparedness for anything' a creed—these seem to drive one to the "Crisis-Ethic." It may well be that such a life was needed to enable one to understand the Bible. You can only appreciate interpretations when you really know the facts to be interpreted. (See also page 57.)

Now I think we may say this attitude is preserved to-day in the strong conviction, held despite all challenge, of the absoluteness and reality of our values. One is struck by the increased demand for poetry by the people who buy books not less than by the quantity and quality of the new verse which is being published. I believe, too, that despite the squalor and desolation in which we normally live our sense of Beauty has grown more strong and deep. The clouds and sunset are still sacramental. The poppies on our way up to the trenches, the primrose in the deserted garden when we get back, are very "full of divinities" for us.

They help us to realise that after all the sane and pure and beautiful endures, untouched by the passing madness of mankind. Again it is seen in that amazing power of detachment which our Students in Arms out here display. I have seen two subalterns sitting in a shell-hole in the middle of the fiercest shelling, playing calm, enthusiastic chess. Take up a dozen books of soldiers' verse. The subjects do not, as a general rule, turn upon the war at all. 'Mud and blood and khaki are conspicuously absent.' They are concerned with Wiltshire Downs and Cotswolds, with the Cher and King's and country rectories, or with the hopes that lie behind the stars. To them the phrase "realities of war" is entirely inadmissible. As the men all feel that their real lives are not here at all but across in 'Blighty,' so to Faith the *Real* is elsewhere. But we can firmly lay hold of it here. We have prayed to God in No Man's Land: we know full well that He is 'omnipresent.' When we pass through the waters He is beside us. His work is before and His reward is with us. We 'endure as seeing Him who is invisible."

B. So far, then, we have seen the independent and substantial existence of Faith at least not overthrown by this experience. But now we must become a great deal more definite. For though Faith is (as Kant would say) 'autonomous,' a genuine faculty of knowledge submitting to no test outside itself—'judging all things and itself judged of none'—yet it is of the essence of its claim that it is *Reality* with which it comes in contact. That is to say that we must also look more closely at the *content* of our Faith. Here our present experience is invaluable. It tests not only Faith but also faiths.

Many of our cherished, untried faiths (in the sense of beliefs) may very likely have to be surrendered. For this life is the religious winnowing-fan, the purger of the spirit's threshing-floor. It separates the kernel from the husk. One can see now that some things long accepted do not fit the facts of our experience and therefore cannot be admitted true. Indeed the theological difficulties are at the present time the most acute. Traditional Christianity, I fancy, seems to most men more remote than ever from the actual concerns of life. And the most pressing task before the Church now is to show that the faith she holds is truly an interpretation of hard facts. Men, it is true, are not interested in dogma : but they ache for a solution of the Universe. What we need now is a creed that is bold enough to state essential things essentially. All that the most enlightened minds are seeing really lies at the heart of Christianity. But we are so choked by accumulations, so occupied with trivialities, that we do not let men see what we really stand for. Mr. Wells in preaching what, at bottom, is inherent in the Christian outlook thinks he is propagating its successor.[1] And amongst all the innumerable ' objections ' and doubts I have discussed with men out here, I do not think there has been one which questioned the central attitude of Christ. They are all concerned with unimportant details supposed to be vital to the whole position. The Church has specialised in irrelevancies, and she will never grip this age with these. It is an age that is hungering for reality. Our social life at

[1] As a matter of fact, I did not read Mr. Wells's great book, purposely, till I had written this Essay in draft.

the front well illustrates this. I suppose everybody notices the marked increase in friendliness and comradeship the nearer one gets to the firing-line. (Unfortunately one also sees it lessening at every stage of the journey to the coast.) I take it that our grasp of reality tightens as we get nearer the "Black Hole." The front shrivels up all pettiness and smallness and external, arbitrary distinctions. We know there that a man's a man for a' that. So in Religion. This experience unmasks the often really grotesque unimportance of some things hitherto considered binding, and throws new emphasis on things forgotten. It leaves us the essentials of our religion in holy, awe-inspiring simplicity.

Let me then venture to examine shortly some of the prevalent theologies which have been found wanting at their trial, and try to suggest how real Christianity supplies the true solution in their stead.

(i) And first, I think we see how lamentably inadequate is the traditional idea of God. If one learns anything in this life it is the difference between Good and Evil. And the weakness of the current Theism is, to my own mind, that it is not *moral*. That is what lies at the back of so much scepticism. Many officers express this feeling in such remarks as "I should feel a hypocrite if I ever went to church again." "If God" (said another) "ever governed Europe He certainly does not any longer now." And their impression is that Christianity has no real answer for these times. But surely there is here true cause for hope. For what we really find in such an attitude is something very far from sceptical. It is the triumph

of the moral sense over an invertebrate theology which left no room for ethical distinctions. Certainly a God whose providence "ordained" the present situation would not be one whom we honestly could worship. It would be our duty to defy his will. But is there any reason to think He did? For us there are only two ways open to the understanding of God's Nature —through the character of Jesus Christ, and the integral, developed conscience. And neither of these two lines of approach can possibly lead to any such conclusion. Perhaps a convenient test-case is provided by the use of the prayer 'Thy will be done.' In common usage it is an expression of acquiescence in the inevitable— an equivalent of the phrase "what will be will be." When some glorious boy is killed by a chance shell people say, "Yes, it is very sad, but it was God's will that he should die." We are even ordered to give God "hearty thanks" because it hath "pleased Him to deliver this our brother out of the misery of this sinful world." I utterly refuse to believe that statement. Too much colour is lent it by that prayer. Of course it is true that God 'overrules' the evil, bringing good out of the heart of it both for the sufferer and for others. That is just the faith of the Resurrection. The Crucified is always vindicated. No crucifixion but issues in larger life and triumph. But I am concerned now with the death itself. And surely just because a thing occurs it is not necessarily the will of God. The test of that is its goodness or its badness. And the fact is we have drawn no clear distinction between God and what is symbolised by "the devil." There are still, I believe, some speculative thinkers who

say that evil is 'unreal.' They ought to spend an hour in the firing-line. If we believe *that* is the will of God there is an end to any ethical religion. That is burned upon one's mind up there. The revelation of naked, unmasked evil in its most revolting shapes throws one back more and more on Dualism. I know this attitude is out of date. But it is, after all, the religion of Jesus Christ. He thought of Evil as the Giant in Armour (Luke xi. 21), the adversary of God's purposes (Matt. xiii. 28); and Himself as the champion of the Kingdom of God over against the Oppressor and his hosts. The Will of God, for Him, is only done as pain, disease, and slavery and wrong give way to joy and health and liberty and righteous dealing, and the powers of evil are beaten and warred down. So that for Him the prayer 'Thy will be done' is inseparable from the thought of the Kingdom. It is not a cry of passive resignation—a 'virtue' which He never inculcated. It is the soldier's prayer of consecration. "Make me, at whatever cost to me, the instrument of Thy Will and Thy Kingdom."

If Dualism be the final word it does, I admit, make nonsense of the Universe. For metaphysics there must be some higher truth. And I think it is in the Cross that Christianity offers what 'transcends' the contradiction: for there we see the already perfect God revealed in conflict with the evil that thwarts Him. But *for religion* what we called Dualism is the only possible attitude. Religion is not concerned with God in His ultimate, essential nature—did anyone ever pray to the Absolute? — but with God in His manward relations. And there, if we

'transcend' our consciences, we transcend religion altogether.

We are bound to hold fast our own moral judgment. But that entails the definite recognition that many things happen which are not willed by God, and are indeed opposed to what He wills. If so, then God must be in some sense finite. But we can worship only what is perfect, and that indeed is what we mean by "God." One can see, however, that between the two—God in His eternal selfhood and God as known by us in time—there is no real contradiction. Christianity is simply founded on its claim to bridge the Gulf. We worship nothing that is less than God. That, so far as I can see, is the real weakness of Mr. Wells's position. But we say that our God *in His manward aspect*, that is, in Creation and Redemption, is a Being who is limited and striving.

It is here that we pass to the second point.

(ii) The failure of this nebulous Theism almost necessitates the Christian outlook—God in terms of Jesus Christ. Still more so does that unexamined faith bound up with the current theory of "Omnipotence." Its inadequacy as an explanation and the discontent that is widely felt with it are summarised in the oft-repeated question, Why does God allow the war to go on? That question must not be dismissed. Those who are at all accustomed to metaphysical ways of thinking probably see that it has no real meaning. To the plain man it is a genuine problem. I think it is clear that Christianity holds the key to riddles of this kind. No doubt the fact that they can be asked at all shows how little we have really grasped it. But

I certainly claim that so far from being—as superficially they might well seem—arguments against the Christian attitude, they show that it alone is satisfactory.

In a sense the war has not produced new problems. It has only heavily underlined the old ones. The ' blank misgivings ' with regard to suffering have always been in the minds of thinking men. But many have never been stung by them before, and now through the experience of these years feel the pains of an implacable doubt. Only the Gospel can afford an answer. None but the Lamb that has been slain can open that sealed book of mystery (Rev. v. 1–11). We cannot, indeed, state unambiguously why it is that things are so. We *can* see that it is good that they should be so—which leaves us satisfied and calm. And the clue is simply to press what is implied in the ancient faith in Christ's " Divinity."

The Church retains the so-called Nicene Symbol, but has not yet had the courage of her creed. We count Athanasius among the immortals. And it is clear that in the main and broadly his contention was extremely right. We cannot worship what only ' resembles ' God. But it has taken us sixteen hundred years to realise for ourselves the truth he stood for. He meant, I suppose, that in Jesus Christ we see not anything less than God but God Himself—that when men ask us What is your God like ? we point to Jesus for the final answer. That gives us a new standard of measurement for all our thought about the Deity. And that is just the " Good News about God " which is the pivot-faith of Christianity. We know God " in the face of Christ." This at any rate is what I mean

by "being of one substance with the Father." But this conclusion gets obscured because we are too apt to fix as permanent that part of the position which is transitory—the categories with which the old thinkers worked. And so we have taken on into the substance of our modern, Western Christianity conceptions which are wholly foreign to it. We still attempt to state the Christian theory about the nature of Divinity in the terms of a non-Christian system. In spite of Christ we still conceive of God far too much like Jews and ancient Greeks. One often feels that conventional Christianity contains very little that is distinctly Christian. It still retains those old ideas of God which the Christian Gospel claims to supersede.[1] God is thought of still as an Olympian, passionless, remote and static, high 'above the battle' of human life. He is credited with an 'Omnipotence' almost physical in its conception, little removed from Zeus and his Golden Chain. He is made a despot, a policeman, a puritan, a scribe, a militarist. And these imagined attributes of Deity are then transferred to the Person of Our Lord, through whom alone we know what God *is* like. Hence comes the paralysing unreality of the 'orthodox' presentation of the Christ.

But this is juggling with holy things. If we really believe in the Incarnation—that God is shown to us in a human life—we must take it in its widest reach. We mean, I suppose, that the character of God is—in terms of human experience—the character of Jesus

[1] An illustration lies ready to hand in the retention by the Church of England of the old Semitic Decalogue by way of preface to her Eucharist.

Christ. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." If so, it must be revealed in the *whole* of Jesus, in the full range of His life and in His death. It has been said, I know, very often lately, but cannot at this time be too much emphasised, that we must finally give up the pre-Christian theory that God is incapable of suffering. We must rather see that there is that in God which we can only speak of as *heroic*, akin to what we men call self-sacrifice. Surely that is the heart of the Christian Gospel—that God's is the love and loyalty and heroism which we see in Jesus of Nazareth. We measure God entirely by that standard. We conceive of Him in terms of the Cross—the symbol not of weakness and defeat but of power and courage and devotion and the glory of triumphant sacrifice. This does not empty God of His Deity. When we speak of God we can only mean the source of all perfection and all values. Christians see that Love is their completion, the ultimate and all-embracing good. But love is perfected in sacrifice. It must ever be a self-giving and a pain. The human cross is the symbol in time and space of Love's real and eternal nature. So we imply, when we say that God is Love, a Perfection which can only be manifested in continual becoming and in strife. And here I think we really do touch something which has a meaning for our generation.

Probably each age must emphasise some one particular aspect of Christianity, and none must think that it can see the whole. And in this present time when all the old world has fallen in and the plans of the new have not yet been disclosed, we must very likely be content with a 'transitional' theology. He is a rash man who

thinks to expound more. But still I would maintain that for us at present the God of the Cross alone has a true appeal. For the war has modified to some extent our ideals and our standards. It has thrown new emphasis on sacrifice and the more active embodiments of Love. At any rate it has shown new heights of splendour and new depths of goodness in ordinary men. And imperatively we must find in God qualities which correspond to these. We can only worship a God who is the source and archetype of the great soldier-virtues. The Christian God is the answer to that need. All that we know about Him comes to us in an heroic life and heroic death. He is not outside the struggle against evil. He is in it, in the turmoil and the pain, sharing with us in the toil and conflict, striving, battling, sacrificing, overcoming. God rides before us conquering and to conquer. He lays His claim upon our loyalty, enlists us in His great adventure, calls us to responsive heroism. The cause comes first, and only as men lose themselves in it can they attain the true end of their being and "find themselves" and their salvation. Christ came to enable us to live (as He Himself has put it) *overflowingly* (John X, 10, Περισσόν) —to act, to do, to work, to strive, to suffer, and in the striving and the pain to know that we are trying to do God's will and work. And that is the peace that passes understanding. "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God"— that is the backbone of the Christian life.

There is silence in the evening when the long days cease,
And a million men are praying for an ultimate release
From strife and sweat and sorrow—they are praying for peace
But God is marching on.

We pray for rest and beauty that we know we cannot earn,
And we are ever asking for a honey-sweet return ;
But God will make it bitter, make it bitter, till we learn
That with tears the race is run.

And did not Jesus perish to bring to men, not peace,
But a sword, a sword for battle and a sword that should not cease ?
Two thousand years have passed us. Do we still want peace
Where the sword of Christ has shone ?

Yes, Christ perished to present us with a sword,
That strife should be our portion and more strife our reward,
For toil and tribulation and the Glory of the Lord
And the sword of Christ are one.[1]

" God is marching on "—to victory. The sweat and tears and blood are not in vain. Good is wrung out of the grip of evil, triumph out of what appears defeat. For it is the Omnipotent who strives and suffers, and " the Lord remaineth a King for ever." Here is the Gospel of the Resurrection, the ultimate victory of the Cross. Ours is essentially a victorious faith, just because it is a faith in God, the perfect and unconquerable Goodness. It is " the bringing in of a better hope " (Heb. vii, 17)—" crucified in weakness, raised in power." God accepts our limitations, sharing with us in the battle : but through His agony He *overcomes*. " His righteousness standeth like the strong mountains. His judgments are like the great deep." Love is stronger than death and Good than Evil. Righteousness must conquer at the last. The Kingdom, in the end, is irresistible.

That is growing, in my own mind, into the one supreme and overmastering faith, which shrivels up

[1] From " Peace," in *Marlborough and other Poems*, by the late Charles Hamilton Sorley (Cambridge University Press).

all lesser loyalties. We have seen things too great in our generation to be able to rest content with anything less. At last, I believe, we know what Jesus stands for. Prophets and Kings have desired to see the things which we see in our day and have not seen them. We cannot placidly go back to conventional Christianity—the religion of respectability and anxious avoidance of small faults. No padre certainly, and probably no man, can find rest for his soul when the war is over in the religion of parochial activities. We must have a faith that is elemental: simple and majestic and compelling. I am quite prepared to see such large developments in the coming form of Christianity that the religion of our sons and grandsons would seem to be almost another faith if it were witnessed by our grandfathers. But in fact they too will inherit the same faith, understood to be living and dynamic, and set forth to men in such a way as to meet the needs of our own time.

There is at least one form of Christianity for which the world should have no use again. The religion of mere pious sentimentality, whether of the type of the P.S.A., or of that most unvirile Jesus-worship with its lavish use of "gentle" and of "sweet"—these, one feels, must surely disappear. We have looked on facts with open eyes, the child-like trait which Jesus always sought; and sentiment means shutting one's eyes to facts. Let us have the courage to say bluntly that Christianity worships only God, and God made known to us in Christ. We seek to identify ourselves with Jesus, and so to be made one with the will of God. So, at least, in all humility, I believe it

right to teach. So regarded it may or may not be found to be patient of the old forms and expressions. But it is possible just now for us to worship no One less than a tremendous God, in the midst of Whose Throne is a Lamb that has been slain.

II.

WAR AND THE SOLDIER'S FAITH.

It may well be that what I have so far written is coloured too much by my personal outlook. Let us then make the attempt to be more objective and bring it to the test of facts. Is there any real evidence? To answer that it is necessary to touch on the much discussed and much disputed question of the effect of war upon the soldier's faith. What is the religion of the soldier? Published statements differ very widely, and what I have to say is extremely tentative, simply based upon my own experience. It has been both limited and unimportant. I really have no claim to be listened to. But any value a book like this may have depends on keeping to personal experience. About the hospitals I can say nothing, and only very little about the Bases. What follows applies chiefly to the rough and ready existence of the front and the areas close behind the lines.

(i) It is probably best to say at once that the alleged religious revival—in the sense in which it is intended—is something nobody has ever seen. Unlike miracles, it does not happen. If it did it would be most suspicious, an extremely dangerous, exotic growth. For

it cannot be too clearly recognised that war is a spiritual narcotic. At the front men simply dare not think much. We know too well how close to us madness lies. "It doesn't do to take it seriously." There are, as we have said, some Giants of Faith who are able to rise right above it. But they are certainly not 'average' men. For the majority it is very different. And the most horrible thing about war in the end—worse than all the physical disgusts so carefully kept from you by the papers—is that it means the cancerous destruction of the highest spiritual faculties and a progressive lowering of standards. Of course it is not in the least surprising. A life that varies between infernal monotony and unnameable obscenity, with never any privacy, leisure or comfort, is not very fruitful soil in which to seek for new growths of spiritual power. It is an unexampled testimony to the golden goodness of human nature that there is so much real religion.

For I do take an optimistic view. The journalist's remark that "irreligion is the keynote of the British Army" is absurd as well as libellous, and betrays a sad want of that sympathetic insight which can see behind appearances. It is true that men do not flock in crowds to services, that their language is astounding, that they sing profane and ludicrous parodies. But all such things are wholly on the surface, and we are out now to discover truth. I make no claim to understand the men properly. Each day one feels the failure more acutely. But I do maintain that there is in the Army a very large amount of true religion. It is not, certainly, what people before the war were accustomed to call

religion, but perhaps it may be nearer the "real thing." It is startling, no doubt, and humiliating to find out how very little hold traditional Christianity has upon men. It is not only their confounding ignorance of the elementary Christian facts—not one in ten, I should think, has a clear idea of what our religion is or implies, or offers—but that they fail to see how it bears upon or helps them in our present circumstances. And very many have an honest feeling that it would be a positive handicap. Clearly something has gone very far wrong. So far as I am able to estimate we are faced now with this situation, a Christian life combined with a pagan creed. For while men's conduct and their outlook are to a large extent unconsciously Christian, their creed (or what they think to be their creed) most emphatically is not. Yet it surely should be possible by interpreting them to themselves to show them Christ the Completer of their Faith (Heb. xii. 1), the embodiment of what they really value.

I do not contend that the English are all Angels. The normal man finds moral self-control as difficult a task as he could wish for. It is doubly hard for men in this life. Separated from their women-kind, completely stripped of their individuality, trained to an abnormal state of physical fitness, with scarcely any prospect for the future, almost the only pleasures open to them lie in crude and animal reactions. All this admitted. Nevertheless I feel that out here one is very near to the spirit of Christ. There is a general wholesomeness of outlook, a sense of justice, honour and sincerity, a readiness to take what comes and 'carry on,' a power of endurance genuinely sublime, a light-heartedness

and cheeriness (nearly always, I believe, put on for the sake of other people), a generosity and comradeship, which are obviously Christ-like. And when they say they "don't hold with religion" they mean the sort of stuff which they quite wrongly, as a rule, suppose the Chaplain stands for. Every padre should always have this text unforgettably before his mind: "*Jesus looking upon him loved him* and said unto him, One thing thou lackest." Imagine him as one of our boy lance-corporals, full of laughter and glorious instincts, exactly the kind of boy that Jesus wanted, but with one further step to go to find Him. All of these are "boys that Jesus loves." But comparatively few yet realise it. What we have to do, then, now is to show them that all the best things in their lives at present—what we call, though they would not, their ideals—are essentially and truly Christian, and that Christianity 'goes one better,' a further step on in the same direction, and gives them power to take that step themselves. We must also show that the Faith of the Church does give—what the faith of the Sunday school it seems does not—a rational account of the facts of life, both historically and psychologically, and a clue to their solution. None of us here are interested in doctrines or care very much what "the Church has always taught." But there is a widespread, living curiosity about the problems of life and religion so far as they can be seen to bear on conduct. The amount of discussion which goes on in tents and billets and dugouts on these matters would perhaps surprise the uninitiated. A direct and simple treatment of religion as a matter of *experience*, using modern

thoughts and phraseology, is always listened to with rapt attention.

(ii) But in all this we have been anticipating. Let me try, if possible, in a few sentences to describe the religion of the soldier.

There is, then, first a startlingly strong belief in the efficacy and power of Prayer, both for others and for self. The extent to which men pray for those at home, for them far more intensely than for themselves, is truly Christian and impressive. The one way to be sure of holding men in speaking to them at our services is to grip on to the thought of home. One feels most definitely in an atmosphere of genuine contact with the Unseen when they are singing (as we do each Sunday) Hymn No. 595 in A. & M.—"Holy Father in Thy mercy. . . ." And after all, if we are right in conceiving God as "Our Father," Home and Religion ought to go together. It may be said that there is nothing here but an emotional enjoyment of whatever can remind us of 'Blighty.' Even if that be true it is something to start from. It is a 'longing for the further shore' which is essentially a religious instinct, a reaching beyond oneself in the right direction. It is a sense we can foster and enlarge.

Naturally the prayers for ourselves turn chiefly upon physical preservation. I grant this is not a very high development. But after all it is prominent in the Psalms, and is (to an extent we had forgotten) in the background of the Gospels. It needed a spice of bodily danger and discomfort to show us the simplicity and greatness of the Religion of the Bible. Probably few of us who write in this book had ever

before been really cold or hungry, much less faced with the constant possibility of a violent and beastly death. Much that before seemed rather remote to us in the markedly physical colouring of the Bible is very pregnant with encouragement now. "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in." Think what that means when you leave your bit of cover while heavy shelling is in progress! Those psalms like XCI and CXX, the most famous parts of the Sermon on the Mount, they carry for us now a new significance. It is true that these prayers of the men are largely magical. For example, they stop praying when they come out of the line; or they think that physical safety exhausts the answer or failure to send an answer to their prayer. But we must remember we are dealing now with a religion that is quite rudimentary. And here at any rate we have a real, living contact with the Supernatural—a foundation upon which to build. It is a basis in experience, not dogma, and so one on which we can confidently work. For myself, I am increasingly convinced that the average man is essentially religious, though his religion may not take the form of its official, organised presentation.

But this strong belief in the power of prayer yet seems to co-exist in most men's minds with a quite hopeless and pagan belief in Fate—"If your number's on it you'll be for it." They do not conceive of the God to whom they pray as making any real revolution in their outlook on the Universe. In particular they fail to see that the privilege of prayer makes any claim on their lives as a whole. The religion of the

Army is, I think, to a large extent *un-ethical*. The moral sense has not yet got to work on it. " Thy will be done " to them means fatalism, the equivalent of " what will be will be." Contrast what it meant to Him Who taught the words—a consecration of Himself to service. We may say, then, that we have a belief in God, but that this belief is not yet ethical. They do not yet see what God means to their lives. The remedy, of course, is just the Gospel. I try to begin at the other end—which apparently was Our Lord's way of starting—and show them instead *what their lives mean to God*. That gives us at once an ethical appeal, by changing the emphasis from " my need for God " into the Gospel of " God's need for me." And that gives life a new magnetic pole.

I confess that out here it often seems impossible to retain belief in an " individual providence." One is taken and another left in such a devil's dance of waste and accident. But on reflection one sees that this is wrong. Surely we cannot expect an all-sovereign God to revoke the laws of gravitation in the interest of prayerful " favourites." That is the very negation of all sovereignty. We have had too crude a notion of God's " providence." Do we mean less to God if we are wounded or our bodily existence shattered ? The sparrows are still God's when they fall to the ground. Possibly we should also think of " Providence " from God's end, so to speak, and not from ours. We should conceive it too in terms of Purpose. His Kingdom and His plan are universal. That is to say they are both incomplete till each individual enters and takes part. Whether I live or die this purpose holds. What-

ever circumstances are, there is still a calling and a work for me, a place for me to fill in the perfect whole. That is just the meaning I have for God. And therefore whatever (as we say) happens to me I can still say in perfect confidence, "O God, Thou art *my* God, Thy lovingkindness is better than the life itself." Nothing could be more individual than that. We can 'cast all our care on Him' just because 'it matters to Him about us' (1 Peter, v. 7, *αὐτῷ μέλει περὶ ὑμῶν*)

Now, if we can put the matter thus, it certainly seems that it will correspond to something that the men already have. Their conduct gives the lie to their fatalism. They have really an unconquerable conviction that life is thoroughly worth while. But this can only rest, as a matter of logic, on belief in God as a God of purpose, which we can share and help to realise. Life has no point at all apart from that, and the Universe negates our aspirations. In that case we are merely sentient inmates of a cosmic lunatic asylum.

For the rest, the creed of the British Army is briefly comprehended in these sayings: Keep smiling: Carry on. (Men always speak of their exhausting fatigues as 'carrying on the good work.') There is not one of us who does not hate this life with all the personality we have. But "it's got to be done" and we have got to "stick it," and we simply dare not indulge in introspection. This 'carelessness' is a great source of heartsearching to many devoted shepherds of this flock. But where in all the literature of Christianity is there any sanction for anxiety? The emphasis is entirely the other way. *Θαρσεῖτε: μὴ μεριμνᾶτε*: Be

of good cheer: Do not worry! There are very many depressing tracts about which turn on "being face to face with death." But this preoccupation with our end seems to me excessively unchristian. It is as though we worried all day long whether we should have bad dreams at night. Our business is to live with all our might and leave the issue in the hands of God. One of the greatest difficulties we have to face here is the superstition which prevails, chiefly with officers and N.C.O.'s, that if men begin to 'turn religious' they will at once begin to "get the wind up." If Christianity really did mean that it would quite obviously be useless. And unfortunately we have often made it seem so. So observers say the men are 'irreligious' because they refuse to take things here too seriously and can even make a joke of death.

But what could be more Christian in spirit than the universal song of the men out here—

> Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag
> And smile, smile, smile.

It is not, I grant, what has generally been emphasised, but surely it is really very Christian. And Christianity really gives the basis on which this unquenchable optimism can rest. It is that which I have discussed throughout this section—unshaken faith in God Who has a purpose which we exist in the world to carry out. Look at the Sermon on the Mount. Our Lord forbids us to be anxious; God, He says, knows all about it. Take the worries of each day as they come. "Don't go worrying about yourselves, but put God and His Kingdom first." "Have faith in God, and there's nothing you cannot do." There are two qualities that

stand out here—absolute devotion to a cause, rising above our limitations in it, and unswerving confidence in a Leader, " casting all our care on Him." These, I think, are two of the main factors in the fellowship of the British Army and in the Christianity of Christ.

III.

CAN CHRISTIANITY MEET THE PRESENT NEED ?

A. The only report we shall ever think ' good news ' in a *communiqué* is the end of the war. That really is the one thing that we care about. Yet candidly, it is to me in some moods the thing I dread and shrink from most of all. It is not only the thought of the inevitable reaction for the nation as a whole. It is for these very boys that one loves in France and longs to see released from this hateful life. What, for them, is the moral and religious future ? Nearly everything depends on the atmosphere to which they return. It is probably true that the effect of the war on the minds of those who have been through it can only be really gauged when it is over. At present one is inclined to a hopeful view. A short but interesting spell of work in a large convalescent depot on the coast was a most encouraging experience. When the men are, for a brief while, their own masters with peace and leisure and comparative comfort, there is a magnificent responsiveness and quite an eagerness for religious teaching. Moreover, the enthusiastic way in which they generally speak about their padres " up the line " shows that some of our labour, at least, is not

in vain. But as a rule I doubt if it goes farther than an ideal and desire due to the personal influence of their own chaplain. The teaching has to come when they get home. Is there a Gospel ready that will grip them? It is clear that they will need something really strong. For the first few months, at any rate, after peace is bound to be a time of relaxation. The sudden removal of a now habitual discipline and of such moral stimulus as this life supplies is bound to make for "letting ourselves go." "I *will* have a time," is the admitted prospect of very many, officers and men. And the question is whether what we find at home will be such as to help or to arrest this process. The natural Christianity of this Army at once so glorious to watch and to us professing Christians so abasing—making us conscious all the time of being in the presence of our spiritual superiors—was created, as it were, *ad hoc*, called forth by these special circumstances. It will not last on into the days of peace unless it is given a powerful ideal sanction. We can only keep the best that the war has done if we present a *living* Christianity. So it all comes down, in the end, to the Church at home.

Now one feels bound to say, quite brutally, that if the Church of England is in the future what it was before the war we have lost these men for Christ irrevocably. Unless we can really manage to get into touch with the average manhood of our nation, I see very little moral hope for England. The question of services and 'Prayer-Book Reformation' lies outside the scope of this Essay. I feel about it as strongly as anybody. But it is after all a superficial matter. The one thing needful for us is a new spirit—the

rushing mighty wind of a new enthusiasm. Conversation with very many 'Tommies' about the position of the Church of England suggests that there are in the end two stumbling blocks. The first is, chiefly at any rate, intellectual—"I cannot understand what it's all about." Our presentation has been remote, unreal, divorced from the concrete needs of actual life. And the second is very much more serious, though essentially connected, a far-reaching *ethical* objection. The Church, they say, does not stand to the nation for what they now believe is the spirit of Christ. Our talk of brotherhood is simple cant—the Church is the private preserve of one social class, taking its moral attitude far too clearly from the predilections of that circle. (The religious always used to condemn Our Lord for consorting with people who were "not respectable.") I cannot honestly deny this charge. They also accuse the Church of moral cowardice in not protesting against social wrong and not insisting on the Christian standards.

B. Now these appear from the Gospels to be the accusations brought by Christ against the religion of His own contemporaries—an intellectual unreality and a scrupulosity in conduct which overlooked the things that matter most. *He met them both by His preaching of the Kingdom.* There was a definite Gospel for the simple, and an all-embracing and concrete ideal for the actual aspirations of the day. It was also something that demanded effort, only to be founded by the Cross. It certainly seems that all that men are saying about the application of Christianity to the facts of our world as we know it, both for national life and inter-

national, both as an explanation and a task, can be brought down to this same simple remedy. Let us boldly do what Jesus did, and put the Kingdom and the Cross in the very centre of our preaching. That will give a real explanation, and an unescapeable appeal. I doubt if we could retain our sanity unless we saw in these present heavy hours what the Jew called the 'Woes of the Messiah'—the birth pangs of a happier day to come. It is only "through much tribulation" that we can "enter into the Kingdom of God." And surely if the war has taught us anything it is that man is at his best and highest when great and hard things are demanded of him. A Gospel of ease will have no real converts. There is laid up an immense reserve of heroism and a readiness to live for visions, and that is what we have to liberate. It can be done, perhaps, in many ways, and I do not claim to have found the philosopher's stone. But to me—and I write simply for myself—it is growing every hour more certain that the Cross alone is the answer to our needs. I feel that my task is merely to suggest that in future we preach unflinchingly the Cross, with all our emphasis upon it, as the Wisdom and Power of God. All the lines of man's philosophy seem to me to meet in it. Philosophy we know to be imperfect; our prophesying we know to be for a day: but in the most splendid thing in the spirit of man—his love, his loyalty, his heroism—we have a clue which we know cannot wholly fail us, but must lead us past the reflection to its Object (1 Cor. xiii). And that is how I have ventured to set forth the Cross in its meaning for our generation.

Now in all that was said about the Crucifixion by

Christ Himself and His best interpreters, there are clearly traceable two main connexions. It is bound up, on the one hand, with the Kingdom, and on the other with Universalism. It negates all artificial differences, of rank, of creed, of nationality. Give men some stupendous common task, overwhelmingly worth living for and dying for, and you have a tie which is closer than any other. So long as we are bent upon "soul-saving" we shall never have a real comradeship. It is bound to be a centrifugal tendency. Selfishness is by nature anti-social. Offer service in a corporate effort and at once you transcend every other claim. We in our day are able to see Paul's meaning in speaking of the fellowship of Christ's sufferings (Phil. iii. 10). It is now an actual fact of our experience. All the world is drinking of one cup, and its wine is life that is poured out for others. All mankind are partakers of one loaf—a body which most literally and truly is being given to be broken. Perhaps we have here some light on the marvellous attitude of the British soldier to his enemy. When two men are together in mortal pains, what does it matter what language they happen to speak? Common suffering overleaps all barriers. The middle-wall of partition must go down. And in this, one trusts, is the great hope for the future—that social prejudices and distinctions, that international jealousies and rivalries, denominational and party 'interests,' may be 'stripped bare' and vanquished and surpassed by the Cross of all Mankind.

They would be, if we will only take the next step, and think of it in the light of the Kingdom of God.

What one dreads most is to lose in the years to come the comradeship we have won in the years of war. A soldier wrote that in six months after peace it will be but a 'radiant and wistful memory.' Shall we go back to fight with one another? There is no doubt, I fear, that Government action and the attitude of many left in England are generating a very menacing and alarming amount of ill-will in our present Army. A relapse into the ways of the so-called peace of the years immediately before the war can only be avoided by great effort. The only certain counter-influence is to enlist us all in a common enterprise, united by a single vast ideal. Preach the Kingdom of God in its sublimity, in all its range and all its glorious hopes, show us it is something for us all, call us all to live and work for it, enlist us all in the service of the Master, and make Him living, concrete and appealing. Do not offer us 'Church privileges' or tell us that we ought to go to Church. Charge us rather with Church responsibilities. Show us God as the King of all the world; bid us consecrate ourselves and act and live. Then I believe you will find that the Church of England has a place she has never held before. There is the making of a lasting comradeship, embracing all the sections of our people. The one hope lies there, in a common ideal, which—as a famous book has put it—will cause the duchess and the navvy to ask one another, 'What are we doing for It?' And such an ideal Jesus preached and died for. Nor can we possibly stop our thought at England. Show mankind that we have a single task, for which the nations exist to co-operate, making each its special contribution, and

we have gone far to solve the international problem. Only an ideal can end war ; only a common faith can bring men together. But the Kingdom won by the Cross is universal. 'And all the nations of the world . . . shall bring their glory into it.'

Traditional Christianity is on its trial. The next few years, I believe, will give the decision whether it will or will not be the world's religion. More and more men are turning away unsatisfied from what we have been accustomed to set before them. More and more they are coming to see the meaning of what we have forgotten or obscured. The 'new religion' they think they are discovering is really bound up in the Christian Gospel. It is for us not to be 'apologetic,' but actively to seize the situation and interpret it in the light of Christ. There is no finality in human life, in religion any more than in other spheres. We can only speak to the men of our own day, in the terms which they can understand. But Christianity holds the key of the future. If we can strenuously 'buy up' the present we can leave the future to its own developments. The Spirit of God is living and progressive. If we can win our own age for our Master it is all the stewardship that is asked of us : and our world will be saved—yet 'so as by fire.'

III

BELIEFS EMPHASISED BY THE WAR

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III

BELIEFS EMPHASISED BY THE WAR

I HAVE been asked to write about the War and Theology. One has heard of the process of putting the Gospel in a nutshell ; one has not heard of anyone who has carried it out successfully. So here it will only be possible to say a little about one or two points of theological teaching which men have lately been inclined to thrust into the background—largely because there is not room in the front row on a limited stage for all the actors—to which the war has pointed meaningly, beckoning them to the front.

The war has once more focussed our attention upon the fact that the spiritual war is a reality and that we have to fight against a cruel and relentless foe ; it reminds us that every weapon will be needed and that we have to go into training. St. Paul was so strong and so right about that, and the men of his day understood it when it was put to them. Athletics and military life were two things that men were familiar with and interested in under the Empire, and the analogy was clear and useful when it was pointed out. Thus we read of men going into physical training

in order the better to endure the physical tortures devised for them by their adversaries. The same analogy holds good to-day, and men have the same reasons for seeing the force of it. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," but through it, *πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.*

There has not been as yet any alliance between these powers against all that Christianity stands for, but it will come unless we forestall it. Our warfare has lately been far too half-hearted—the main reason being, it is to be feared, that so many different trumpets have been sounding in so many diverse camps. It is also sadly true that there is no sign of an alliance between the different Christian bodies; thus there is no immediate likelihood of that fundamental unity which is so essential to success. In our own camp too there have been heard rather a diversity of trumpet sounds. It would appear that successive trumpeters rather prided themselves on the fact. It is, they would assure us, of the *esse* of the Church of England. It is time we replied firmly and finally, *μὴ γένοιτο.*

One thing seems to have become apparent: it is time that the central body of English Churchmanship, which has piloted the Church through many squalls, and to which the quiet yet steady progress of the Church has been largely due, should now become articulate. Let us definitely ask the Bench of Bishops for a lead in the matter of a real discipline and of the limits of theological speculation. Let us have a clear statement of what is considered to be essential, which will provide us with a minimum, and what is not; what is allowed and what will not be tolerated, which

will give the maximum. The principle of the Church of England with regard to Theology is evident enough : state clearly what is *de fide*, and do not endeavour to define minutely doctrines which Christ left undefined. There are regions in which faith must reign supreme ; into these reason can only dare to penetrate as a wide-eyed, wondering child, clutching at Faith's hand and asking for guidance and illumination. In the recognition that most of the catastrophes of history are due to want of balance she deliberately adopted a *via media*, striking a balance between two extremes, both of which she believes to be clean off the rails of primitive Catholic Christianity. The evident desire of the Reformers—and the Church has never departed from that desire—was to include as many as possible of those who tended in either direction, but it is surely time that some definite limits were laid down.

It was recently suggested by a chaplain of some literary eminence that most of the preaching to the Forces was concerned with answering questions which the men never asked. Is it not an important part of the chaplain's work to lead men to ask these questions ? If it be possible to answer such questions as : " Why does not God stop the war ? " without treating of the Nature and Being of God, of the relation in which He stands to humanity, of the methods chosen by Him of dealing with a creature whom He has endowed with free-will, namely, the Incarnation and its extension, and, above all, of the way in which His Will can be, and very often is, withstood, why, then there can be no need for us chaplains at all. The answer is either simply that there is no God, or that He is only a

puppet God, and therefore powerless. Or else it involves much definite teaching about rather complex problems. It is much simpler to say, "Hang your questions, let's get on with the war," but it will not help honest inquirers. From what one knows of the average sermon preached by the average man every Sunday in times of peace and war alike one would hardly come to the conclusion that there is too much emphasis on theology in the preaching of to-day. By all means let us place a proper accent on Christian ethics, but it can scarcely be said that the average churchgoer knows all that there is to know about the central facts of the Christian Faith. Many a layman will say that he dislikes dogma, because he has inherited that phrase from mid-Victorian days; in many cases he will not know what it means.

Again, many of those who make it their duty to "teach" in their sermons have specialised in one or two points of theology, and not infrequently these consist of matters of no particular importance. One man will be wrapped up in mediæval ideas about the saints or the sacredness of the number seven for the sacraments, while another has never escaped from the Calvinistic horrors of predestination into which he tumbled as a young student. In either case every sermon preached is much coloured by the general set of ideas which surrounds the darling doctrine of the individual. The Church has made excellent provision for the treatment of the whole Faith in her selection of Epistles and Gospels for the Sundays. She has been careful to set before us in these Scriptures a sane and useful combination of doctrine with its practical

issues. But so many of us are wiser than the Church. The war has made most of us ask questions, and many of the questions bring us right up against the real mysteries of life. Yet for St. Paul a mystery was something that had been half revealed, the other half of which we are to spell out for ourselves in the light of what has been told to us. We realise now more than ever how little we know of what we ought to have known, how little we were prepared for a great catastrophe, because we had, as cowards, shirked facing small ones. We are made to see how little we had taught while we had the opportunity, and how far we have been from seeking opportunities when they were not very apparent. What the Church needs —all will admit it—is a sound constructive policy, a real uniformity which is something more than a surface rigidity of exactness, hiding many sores. This involves a definite lead from those in authority, as we have said, in short a wholesome and workable discipline which is based upon a wide, sympathetic, and intelligent outlook upon the problems of modern life, and which runs through and applies to all ranks. Whether we shall get it or no is another story.

The appearance of another volume from the pen of Mr. H. G. Wells makes us realise the need for definite teaching more than ever. There is no reason for regarding Mr. Wells as a new papal constellation in the ecclesiastical horizon. He has a perfect right to his opinions. On the other hand, there is no call to water down the teaching of the Church in order to meet him halfway; nor is there any warrant for such a course. If we wish to be Christian let us say

so boldly, and be ready to accept gladly any consequent *stigmata ;* if not, let us do the other thing. There will always be those—as there have always been—who demand simpler theologies and who cry out for short cuts to a better knowledge of God. We may be thankful for such a desire. If they find Him it is not for us to cavil ; we are not the Holy Ghost. The purpose here is to suggest certain points which need emphasis just now ; it is an endeavour to indicate some things with regard to which we may perhaps find ourselves in general agreement one with another so that we may all join in presenting them definitely as affording a satisfactory answer to many of the questions which men have learnt to ask. An age of science demands a certain amount of exactness in replies that we have to make, and yet there is such a thing as speculative theology, though perhaps we shall do well not to over-emphasise that side.

I.

SIN.

It is not too much to say that the present generation has entirely lost all sense of the awfulness of sin. Time was—some of us can still remember it—when publicity constituted in a large measure the punishment for wrong-doing. The most dreadful thing about sin to-day is its unblushing shamelessness. You may quote Nietzsche by the yard, and you may point to many more modern disseminators of his doctrines in less repulsive forms, in the endeavour to account for the fact ;

it is the fact's self that matters, that has to be dealt with. And this is certainly something which calls for intelligent teaching. Men are all out against a particular habit when it produces bad results on a large scale—witness the agitation against venereal disease. But they do not seem to see, or perhaps do not choose to see, that the cure for the disease lies in no new treatment of the diseased, but in the application to humanity in general of the old treatment, the old moral laws, which give sound and sensible teaching against adultery and fornication.

"The moral equivalent of war." What is there for us to teach about sin?

(*a*) If evil be a negative thing, then there is no need for war. The conquest of the world for Christ is a matter of simple education. Can anyone be found so blind as to uphold this hypothesis? Your struggling God, Mr. Wells, seems to have a definite opponent. In your own struggling towards Him you seem to be conscious of active opposition. It is not enough to say that He is fighting through a mass of self-imposed limitations—which any sensible person will feel to be true—for this would not account for the cruelty that has to be encountered or the Passion which has to be endured. A God whose mere self-imprisonment necessitated such things were scarcely a God to whom we should feel attracted with lives filled with worship and hearts brimmed with love. I do not quarrel with terms which the metaphysician dubs anthropomorphic. To show God as Love and then to define that love as a fixity of will on the side of all that is holy and good and true is to put

forward a fine conception and one which we feel to be correct. But—*laus Deo*—there is very much more to follow.

Having expressed some aspects of His infinity in finite nature, He deigns to speak to it in its own language and to make His self-manifestation to it comprehensible in the only possible way. He has translated His love into terms of human life. A mere will could not display sacrifice satisfactorily to a being composed as men are composed, nor would its fixity of interest and passionless regard—however intense—be accepted by such beings as love. It is a little weak and very human to say in consequence that He is a finite God. But it is in many cases a sign of grace, the evidence of an arrival at a temporary halting-place in the stupendous progress

> From the finite to infinity,
> And from man's dust to God's divinity.

Evil, then, with all its evidences of victories over the manifested side of God, shows every sign of being a positive thing. From positive we pass to personal. I am old-fashioned enough to believe in a personal *fons et origo*. I simply accept and am not prepared to argue. It is not a vital point. In any case Evil presents itself as finite, for its victories show no signs of finality, and there are other reasons multitudinous and obvious.

(*b*) But some man will say (to use a Pauline formula) "Is it not true that war is a great purifier?" Yes, in some cases. There are doubtless many Mr. Britlings, men who stood with one foot on the primrose path of dalliance, whose little cosmos was turned completely

upside down by the advent of war, and who learnt to see that life was real and earnest and that that kind of life was not. They realised not only that country came before politics, not only that duty was higher than pleasure, but that there is such a thing as truth, and that it comes before anything else ; that life is greater than death. These thoughts lead us on, as they will lead Mr. Britling on—I hope that he will write a pamphlet about it—to see that God is love and life and happiness, that God is all in all, and that sin is beastly and brutal and cruel—and unnecessary ; if that be an anti-climax I leave it, for it is the thing that we need to learn.

But then for every one such there are at least two who came out here from sheltered homes to learn filthy language, lying and loose jesting from others who had always done these things. There are two more who had always looked at womanhood through spectacles rose-coloured by the sweet memory of mother and sisters, but who learnt all too quickly to look open-eyed upon shame, themselves unshamed. They were told so often that " French people look at these things differently ; they are not prudes." And there is one poor lad who sits in the corner of the billet listening with ears tingling and with quickened pulse—half indignation, half curiosity, newly-aroused—to stories told by his fellows about haunts of vice, invested by them with some sickening sort of glamour. He draws nearer to the edge of the vortex, is sucked in, to emerge disgusted, disillusioned—but diseased.

Then, too, while the greedy paw of this bloodthirsty tyrant is crushing the life out of many of our best and

noblest in the many lands to which its tentacles reach, and is leaving many others, maimed and broken, to grope and crawl through the rest of life, so many at home seem as yet to be scarcely touched by the consciousness of what war is and means. And some are fattening themselves upon it, so do not in their heart of hearts desire peace.

Once more when peace does come there will be the inevitable reaction with its horrid tale of greedy excesses, and even, worst of all, its basenesses and sufferings consequent upon a cheapened view of the value of human life together with a cessation of a fine system of discipline.

All this cries out for an intelligent preaching of the awfulness of sin based on an intelligent appreciation of the Nature and Being of God.

(*c*) Has the war revealed God or obscured Him? Or are we, perhaps, just where we were? So far as individuals are concerned the answer depends so much on varying circumstances in different cases. The attitude of men in general would probably be to say that there is no place for God in the battle front, since all the accompaniments are so alien to all preconceived notions of the Deity. We know that most preconceived notions about matters religious are hopelessly wrong. There is so much of acquiescence, of credulity, of superstition abroad that Faith has got crowded out to a large extent. When men say "I have been thinking," and proceed to relate what their thoughts are, one finds a jumble of elemental things, sadly tortured and twisted by being brought for the first time in such lives face to face with hard fact—the

penalty which men have to pay for having treated religion as a thing apart.

God does not speak with the voice of guns nor through any instruments of death. We must not hope to hear Him in the thunder of the heavies nor in the rattle of machine-guns. He is not in the storm, the earthquake, or the fire, but afterwards in the moments of calm those who attune their ears may catch an echo of the still, small voice.

He was a God of war, fighting and conquering, to the ancient Israelite, and is a God of peace and joy, soothing and inspiring, to the mystic. Both were real experiences. Yet He can only falsely be a God of money, with interests centred in exchange, to the financier, or a God of barter, with thoughts mainly fixed on market prices, to the merchant. There is some criterion—the test of genuine experience. Is He a God of pain, Himself wounded and dolorous, to the sufferer ? Is He a God of sorrow, grieved and heart-wrung by human sin ? I know only of God as He is revealed to me in Jesus, who pointed to the Father, " He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and through the intimate relationships with Him that are possible in and through our Lord. In Jesus I see such overmastering love and gentleness and pity, such complete sympathy and identification with human life, all bound up with manifested intention to empower and heal, that I say " Yes ; somehow—though I dare not, cannot say how—He suffers in and with the sufferer."

What use then to vex busy minds with abstruse reasonings as to the origin of sin or the problem of

evil ? God forbid that we should go on saying that we are not worrying about our sins. But why worry as to how they came to be possible or whence the principle proceeded ? It is there in man's life and grieves a divine heart. All the sin of the world could never quench divine love or prevent the untiring stretching out of the Divine Lover towards His errant child. But, on the other hand, small sins, so-called, can easily block the entrance to the soul, and the accumulation of sins makes love ineffective, since the object of it has " dug himself in " in hostile territory.

How many a David there has been of late in our own stricken land who, as he stands reading the fateful telegram telling of the death of a sordidly peccant Absalom, has forgotten all else in one great heart-cry of grief. And God's love must be greater than man's. But men must learn the awfulness of sin before they can hope to appreciate the meaning of pardon and restoration through love. And yet it can only be love that will teach them to fight it ruthlessly, as it deserves, and conqueringly.

II.

THE SACRAMENTAL VIEW OF LIFE.

Man, with his curious commixture of seen and unseen, belonging to two different worlds, is yet intelligible as a whole. I speak of the nature of man ; individuals are elusively unintelligible even to themselves. It seems mercifully fortunate that God understands, and that the method and means of salvation

are in His hands. The Incarnation is too vast and too complete a conception to be the outcome even of the conglomerate experience of many ages of men. The two realities—Man and God-man—form the basis of a sacramental theory of life, and both come from God. The one is the initial experiment of Divine self-expression, the beauty of which became marred—yet not irretrievably—by the misuse of the divinest part of man. That is odd and it needs a volume, but no matter. The second experiment was final as an incident, but eternal as a principle. Else it were but an invitation to dumbest despair. The method intended by the principle has for its object the re-inspiring of the race—offspring of the first experiment—by setting in motion an ever active force of renewal.

Why did it take the form of an incarnation? I suppose first because we humans have our comprehension limited to human things—mysticism, other-worldliness, will always be "caviare to the general"; and, secondly, because the appeal of God is not to a part of man, but to the whole. In some mysterious way we believe in the resurrection of the body; I say "mysterious" because the moment we try to define the resurrection-body we only succeed in producing statements which would destroy any sane man's belief in that article of the Creed. "Do not define" may be a confession of weakness so far as it touches our knowledge, but it is a confession of strength so far as it applies to Faith. But the "one divine far-off event to which the whole creation moves" includes, I take it, the redemption of the body. It is inconceivable how this is to be, yet the very fact of the

Incarnation says that it is so; we can only bow before the decision, recognising humbly that at present "we see in part."

The two experiments, then, in self-expression on the part of God were sacraments, as we understand sacraments, that is to say, outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual realities. The second was an eternal principle, the definite aim of which was the re-establishment, by renewal, of the first. This can only be effected—a glimpse into the obvious—individually. We, as a body of Churchpeople, have not fully appreciated this sacramental view of life, and many have fought against it. Again many have been far too restricted in their application of it to the scheme of salvation, held back partly by a fear of Romanism and partly by the statement of the Catechism that two of the sacraments are generally necessary to salvation. It was a statement necessitated, like many others in the Book of Common Prayer, by a special set of circumstances in a peculiar age. We can now go back to St. Augustine and see that the Church is a great sacrament, the Body of Christ, which includes a number of sacraments, at the head of which are Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

If the war has called upon us spiritually for anything at all it has demanded shrilly that we view with common-sense, that we set ourselves to learn and appreciate, this sacramental view of life, and the method of Christ in the Church for dealing with it. It will not be possible to insist upon a special sacredness for the number seven. I do not know why we should follow blindly—as men in earlier centuries followed—the

lead of Peter the Lombard in this matter. The only compelling reason apparently is to be found in the orders of the Council of Trent. And yet that Council has no more to do with us than, say, any given meeting of the British Association. It is an interesting event in the history of the stifling of religious experience, and of that most anti-Christian of all religious methods—the stereotyping of the method of salvation. It is of great importance for a certain religious sect, but has nothing to do with us, surely.

St. Paul's great anxiety was "that the ministry be not blamed." In the general failure of the Church's members to appreciate the magnitude of the sacramental and its issues we must lay the blame upon the ministry. We live in the dispensation of God the Holy Spirit, yet who would think so from reading or hearing most of the public utterances of teachers? So many seem to imagine that all that there is to be taught about the Blessed Spirit can be said on Whitsunday. One thing has specially struck very many of us out here, and that is the readiness of men to appreciate the idea of the activities of the Spirit of God. It will never be easy for men to appreciate the inner significance of the Cross of Christ. Its beauty as an emblem of sacrifice is obvious to all, but the aspect of personal cross-bearing is the hardest lesson of life. Is it not better far to bring men into close relationship with the Holy Spirit in the full belief that when He is come He will guide them into all truth?

And after all the efficacy of all sacraments is the result of the working of the Spirit. Sacramental method and reality are both summed in the Eucharist.

We may well take it as an example of the Church of England's point of view in the matter of sacraments in general. It is unfortunate that our Office alone among the Liturgies of the Church omits the Epiclesis. The Romans at least speak of it, even if it be not very apparent. It necessitates an emphasis in our teaching upon the underlying fact. A few dull souls contend that it does not really matter, since the omission even of the Prayer of Consecration would not be a matter of great moment. If that be so, what is it that makes this service different from any other ? We in France can testify that there are many who value it as such. They tell us that it is full for them of a special life and peace and joy and that their own lives seem emptier when they are kept away. Is that merely the result of some mental gymnastic ? If so, the development of such power would suffice to produce the required result without ever attending the sacrament. Another will tell you that he can worship in a Roman church where he knows that the Sacrament is reserved, but finds it difficult to do so in an English church where there is no reservation. This seems to tend in the direction of fetish—scientifically we should think, I suppose, of auto-suggestion. If the presence of God depends upon that we shall soon out-Wells Mr. Wells. It becomes increasingly apparent that theologically the practice of Reservation for the purpose of worship is indefensible.

Can a Divine Presence be localised, as Moses thought it to be localised in the matter of the burning bush ? Again we can only go to Jesus. According to His own claims, in Him there was such localisation, and from

Him came the promise of a continuance, *e.g.* where two or three are gathered in His name. From Him too came the promise—for it was no less—" This is My Body." Is it wise to define philosophically how this comes about ? Is it not more in accord with ancient practice to see and feel and touch—and adore ?

I need Thy presence every passing hour,

must be the cry of every Christian heart, and it must be that ever-Presence that makes actually more intense the moment of contact, when in Communion we touch the hem of His garment with the hungering desire to be made whole.

So with the Holy Word, the spoken exhortation, confirmation, penance, the ministry, and so on through the precious list, God the Holy Spirit is working His miracles of grace where Faith comes wide-eyed, large-hearted, prayer-laden, with quickened receptivity determined to assimilate.

Thus to all such questions as " How can a man be born again when he is old ? " " How can this man give us His flesh to eat ? " " Hath the Son of Man power on the earth to forgive sins ? " and so forth, there is but one answer, " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." It should not, then, be " Do you believe in the Blessed Sacrament ? " but " Do you believe in Jesus ? " The denial of the Presence in the Eucharist is more than a denial of Divine omnipresence, or even of Divine immanence. The Blessed Sacrament is " afire with God " more intensely than is " the wayside bush." To deny that involves the denial of the true doctrine of the Incarnation. How God can localise

His presence I do not pretend to know ; that He does so I know as surely as I know anything.

Once more the crucifix is stamped upon every word of the service. This is the way along which we must lead men if we are to bring them to the Cross. Enough paper and ink have already been wasted in the course of the world's story on arguments about the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist. Really one might as well argue about the Christian view of God. It was a positive delight, an accepted duty, to do so when one was first ordained ; but now ? No one who has knelt at the Holy Mysteries amid the din of shot and shell will have failed to see the obvious truth that the Eucharist *is* sacrifice. The Christian who comes there to meet his Lord feels powerfully that he must learn to say "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus " ; the pictured Lamb with His hands and feet and head and side punctured with wounds that tell of love, and ask for no less, cries " sacrifice " in each communion so loudly that we see the need for engraving upon our lives the motto of St. Paul, " I die daily."

From this, the highest point of sacramental union with our Leader, we soldiers of the Lion of the tribe of Judah can learn the fighting value of all other means of grace. Their object is the same, each in its own degree—to equip us for the more effective battling against the powers of evil so rampant in the world. War is a sordid and horrible thing, but it can be waged gloriously in the spirit of " gallant and high-hearted happiness," when the motive is pure and undefiled. Much more true is this of the Christian campaign. Only cut the throat of selfishness and bury

it unhonoured and unsung at the first cross-roads of life. The sacraments are the pledges of fellowship, the love chains of the brotherhood, the gloriously encircling bands of the Body of Christ, the kisses of Jesus for His Bride. Perish the thought that conceives them as merely sentimental. They are all power, and communicate the fierceness of the Man of Sorrows against all that is wrong. But no one need fight a lonely battle in some unnoticed corner. Each can summon the full resources of the great army to his side. In this way weaklings have become more than conquerors, and will do so again.

III.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

The Church of England seems to have shrunk from dealing with this subject because of a somewhat foolish fear. It was felt in Reformation times that some abuses could only be dealt with by eliminating entirely the practice, which led to the abuse, from the Book of Common Prayer. It is rather like the process of cutting off your nose to spite your face. It is true that we gather from the writings of several of the Reformers that in their opinion the time would come when with the proper safeguards Prayer for the Departed could be restored. That time has never come. But to-day men are asking questions about the state of the departed; they want to know whether the Church can shed any light on the subject. We still have to

proceed warily for three reasons : (*a*) it is a subject which has been

> Profaned by every charlatan
> And soiled by all ignoble use ;

(*b*) the spiritualist has renewed his activities, and seems to some of us to profess too much, an attitude of mind not unknown among some preachers who have constituted themselves specialists ; (*c*) we are face to face with the studied reserve of Jesus and His disciples in the matter.

Yet all that we know must come from Scripture. We need not trouble ourselves with current Jewish eschatology. Our Lord, for instance, used it as the background for the parable of Dives and Lazarus, but He was teaching a moral lesson, and not giving instruction about the future life. But we find Him telling the dying thief that he would enjoy that day the companionship of his Master in Paradise—that gives us a definite abode of departed spirits, to use a well-known phrase ; we should be more correct perhaps if we said a definite state of waiting. " To be with Christ " is St. Paul's term, which implies some conscious recognition of Him and some comfort from the realisation of His nearness. The thief had much to learn. His initial act of faith was analogous to that which we enjoy at the moment of conversion, which is the beginning of a long process. The why and the wherefore of our existence, our relation to God, our possibilities in another sphere—these are points about which he knew nothing and with regard to which we are hazy. Further, the process of the taking of his manhood into God through Jesus could scarcely have been

completed either by his confession of faith or by his act of dying.

But we are told by St. Peter of certain activities of Jesus in the newer state, and in consequence the Church has seen fit to insert a clause in the Creed on the subject of His entry into that state. We read of a mission in that region, a preaching to the spirits in prison—a most Christ-like thing. It can only mean a self-revelation of Jesus to those beyond the veil, which postulates a state in which there is conscious activity and a continuity of life. (Can we dare to say that this only refers to victims of catastrophe ?) The thought is not developed, which is an excellent sign, nor is it drawn out at length in the later work, the Apocalypse, which is also healthy. These facts tell us plainly that we are not meant to know a great deal about the future life, but we know enough to fill us with hope and thankfulness.

On the face of it the mere shedding of the body cannot make great changes at once in the character. This removes the chief medium of temptation for a large proportion of people. But I should hesitate before saying that anyone is beyond the reach of temptation just because he has passed from this sphere. I can see no warrant for so saying. It must be allowed that with a clarified vision and a larger outlook temptation may be bereft of much of its power ; yet a life which has been given wholly to some kinds of sin, such as lying, hatred, and blasphemy, would find plenty of opportunity for continuing them. The Bible is particularly hard on liars, and we can quite understand the attitude. On the other hand,

given a deep-seated desire for spiritual progress, a real ambition for worship, there will be an instant beginning of a real forward movement as soon as the limitations imposed by the flesh are removed. The first and most obvious process must be that of purification. As St. Paul puts it, "We have all sinned." We all know well enough that every sin has a lasting effect. We know also that each one has effects outside the life of the person who commits it. Some suffer real and agonised remorses in this world in the recollection of these wider results; *but some do not.* It is perhaps a matter of temperament. One cannot suppose those who cause much pain and suffering to others in the world, and who do not worry about it, are therefore going to escape scot-free. Hell has been over-defined by some foolish people, but it has been under-defined by others more foolish. Some of us know something of what hell means in this life, and cannot but feel that it will be even more of a reality when sensitiveness is quickened. The Church of England bids us pray thus for a soul on the point of departure: "Wash it, we pray Thee, in the Blood of that immaculate Lamb that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever sins and defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before Thee." The Prayer-book gives no order as to what to pray when the soul has actually departed. As it is only then that the process referred to can be experienced, it seems sensible to continue the same prayer.

It is clear, then, that officially we recognise a process of cleansing and purifying in preparation for a perfect communion with an all-pure God. The more that process is carried out here, the less it will be needed afterwards. To argue "Why worry about it at all here, if it can be done afterwards?" is quite vicious. And with such an opinion goes the claim that a man who dies in battle is for that reason necessarily saved. Many of us have met a similar belief in popular theology before the war. We have stood at the bed upon which lay the body of a hardened and oft-convicted criminal to hear some relative say "Ah, poor dear, he's in heaven now." All these views seem to leave utterly out of sight the central point, the continuity of existence. A wise old writer put the matter in a nutshell: "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

I suppose that the chief interest among the masses for the moment centres round the possibility of communion with the departed such as is dealt with in "Raymond." It may as well be stated at once that all that the Church of England can give will mean comfort and hope to the true Christian, while to those who are only curiously inquiring it will mean disappointment. Communion with the departed is a solid reality in the Body of Christ, a communion cemented by prayer which is mutual. There can be little room for doubt on the subject in the minds of Christians. The departed have their needs, though we know little enough of their nature. For these they themselves will pray. But their prayers are far less likely to be purely selfish now than when they were

with us. Memory will be keener than ever and love more strong. Their prayers for us should be of immense value and might well explain some of the phenomena of life. For ourselves, we have now got beyond the once popular attitude expressed by Swinburne :

> Thou art far too far for wings of words to follow,
> Far too far off for any thought or prayer
> * * * * * *
> Our dreams pursue our dead and do not find.
>
> We feel that in prayer we and they together are
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

And we shall probably frame our petitions on the lines of the prayer in the Book of Common Prayer already quoted.

Yet surely there is a moment of closer nearness in the Holy Mysteries. Bishop Gore worked out for us some thoughts on the corporateness of the Church Catholic as conceived in the idea of feeding on the Body of Christ. The thought really lies too deep for words ; but we feel that it means the imparting of a wonderful reality to the union between us and ours in Him. That they still feed on the Heavenly Food we can scarcely doubt. The need for signs, symbols, and sacraments passes with the passing of the body, but the realities behind them remain, and the need for those realities can never pass.

It must be of some importance that they are still human. No notice seems ever to be taken of this fact. If the purpose and method of the Incarnation had been the conversion of the Godhead into flesh the whole thing would have been of transitory meaning and

importance, as flesh is. Half our outlook upon life seems to be based upon that erroneous assumption; and a good deal of our practice and teaching. But the whole scheme of redemption was calculated to deal not with flesh but with something not transitory—manhood. The purpose in view was the taking of the manhood into God. Our eternal glory will be that we are human, and we shall never be gods. So the work of the after-life is the being knit closer into the Body—the manhood—of Christ in order that one day the perfect whole may be taken into God in a final act of redemption and oblation.

We gather from words and actions of Our Lord that family ties are too much accentuated by us in this life; He drew the attention of His listeners away from the Holy Mother and other relatives who asked for Him to the contemplation of the greater family. And it seems probable that the attention of all will be, beyond the veil, more surely fixed on that wider aspect of the brotherhood. Our sorrows and our yearnings are, perhaps, a little too selfish, though it sounds a hard word.

The whole question is summed in this: Is Christ a reality, truly and personally present with us? If so, there can be no difficulty about communion with our departed.

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This may all be scrappy and staccato. The aim is to show that far from needing a lessening of dogmatic teaching this generation needs more than anything else real definite instruction, and particularly in the matters here touched upon, as the war has pointed out. Yet

our aim must not be to divide but to unite. That way progress lies. It is not here possible to deal with speculative theology save to enter a plea that some freedom be allowed to us. We do not know all that there is to know about God and His methods ; and even though our attempts at a higher knowledge in newer circumstances draw upon us the unkindly criticism of the orthodox, we shall not be deterred from our pilgrimage in search of truth.

> Man knows partly but conceives beside,
> Creeps ever on from fancies to the fact,
> And in this striving—this converting air
> Into a solid he may grasp and use—
> Finds Progress—man's distinctive mark alone,
> Not God's, and not the beast's. God is—They are,—
> Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be.
>
> —*Browning.*

IV

FELLOWSHIP IN THE CHURCH

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IV

FELLOWSHIP IN THE CHURCH

No one who has had much experience with the Expeditionary Force in France can fail to be struck with the extraordinary goodfellowship and friendly co-operation which exist between its members, quite apart from any official organisation or control; and advantage is taken of it in many different ways. The wise man who wants to reach some fairly distant point avoids the railways, with their irksome stoppages, and the restrictions of the R.T.O. (odious initials for Railway Transport Officer), who naturally thinks more of avoiding delays than of the comfort or convenience of the hundreds who pass continually through his hands; he launches out boldly on to the main roads, questions every passing lorry till he finds one that will serve him for the whole or part of his journey, and then boards it without ceremony, to find that, if the front seat of comfort is full, one of the occupants is almost sure to vacate a place, and take his post on the rattling, bumping tailboard, to allow the wayfarer to travel in comparative ease. The chaplain who rides alone (some

chaplains—tell it not in Gath—still ride a horse, none have ever had two, or travelled in state with an orderly), when he reaches some point of call, dismounts, and finds at once a bystander who comes forward and offers to hold the horse, or to take it to the nearest stable, and not infrequently, if his stay be prolonged, he is met on his return with the news that his horse has been watered and fed, though fodder is scarce, and rations nicely calculated; nor is any reward expected. It is manifested in other ways; there is nothing which holds the citizen soldier of the New Army to his duty and his post as strongly as this selfsame sense of fellowship. Two examples must suffice: On the first Sunday spent by a new division in France the chaplain of one of the brigades had arranged a celebration for a battalion containing many earnest communicants in the ranks—men used at home to communicate fasting—at an early hour which he believed would be free; some officers appeared, but no men; when the secretary of the Brigade branch of the C.E.M.S. was asked the reason, his reply was, "If we had come, we should have had to leave our share of the fatigues to others, and that would not have commended our religion." Nine months afterwards the same division had been drawn out of the Somme battle, having lost very heavily indeed in casualties, and had gone to a quieter part of the line. Less than a fortnight later the chaplain passed a draft on the road, marching to join its units; most of the faces were new, but among the rear files were several well-known ones. "Why, lads, you were hit at Guillemont, weren't you?" was the greeting. "Yes, but when we heard

that the boys were going into the line again, we asked to be allowed to rejoin at once," was the cheerful reply ; their wounds, slight as they were, were not a fortnight old, and the strain of an attack which had failed and cost their battalion very dear was written on their faces. But to be " with the boys " they were ready to face it all again.

This feeling of fellowship persists through all barriers, and crosses all lines of demarcation. The fact that so many officers of the New Armies have served in the ranks, and have obtained their commissions therefrom, has done a good deal, without any marked prejudice to discipline, to blur the sharp line which existed in the standing army between officer on the one hand and N.C.O. and man on the other. The social differences between ranks have largely vanished, as the manhood of the whole nation has poured forth to serve in the field ; and, strong as was the feeling of comradeship between officer and men of the best type in the Regular Army, it may be asserted with confidence that, especially when the shortness of acquaintance between all ranks in the Service Battalions is taken into account, the fellowship of the New Army is more thoroughgoing and all-pervading.

But *fellowship* is essentially a characteristic of the New Testament. This essay is written far from commentaries and concordances, but St. James seems to be the only apostolic writer who fails to use *κοινωνεῖν* or its compounds ; and his emphasis on brotherhood (his favourite address is *ἀδελφοί*) contains the idea. The writer to the Hebrews prefers *μετέχειν*, but the other root occurs. The Petrine writings also express

the idea without the word, save that in 2 Peter we find the phrase *κοινωνοὶ τῆς θείας φύσεως*. But when we turn to St. Paul and St. John, the verb and its cognates are in constant occurrence ; true, the latter uses it more frequently of man's relation with God, but the opening words of his first epistle give both aspects (1 John i, 3) ; and while St. Paul emphasises rather the fellowship between man and man, such passages as Eph. ii, 5–7, where compounds of *συν-* give the idea, express his sense of fellowship with the Divine. Finally the historian of the development of the early Church pictures *fellowship* at work, alike in the first beginnings of the faith, when the members of the Jerusalem Church had all things in common, and in the last picture which he presents, the arrival of the apostle Paul at Rome, when the members of the Church in that city came out to meet the prisoner and conduct him in honour on the final stages of his journey.

It would be hard to maintain that fellowship is one of the distinctive marks of the Christian Church at the present day ; it is not wholly absent ; but it finds its expression rather in the smaller units of the parish and the congregation than in any conscious bond of union between members of a great society, whether we confine the term " Church " to our own communion or use it more loosely and widely to cover the various and, too often, rival bodies which profess and call themselves Christian ; they would all claim fellowship with the Lord, but fellowship one with another is conspicuous by its absence ; the more widely that the term " Church " is used, the less can fellowship be said to be one of its characteristics.

This contrast with the teaching and practice of the New Testament naturally challenges inquiry ; and the experience of the nation in arms robs of its force the excuse that the growth and size of the society have rendered impossible that personal knowledge between man and man which is alleged to be necessary for true fellowship : there is no such personal knowledge amongst the members of the Expeditionary Force as a whole, and yet the sense of comradeship is a great reality, and has its immediate fruits in a ready and painstaking co-operation.

It will not, perhaps, be unprofitable briefly to inquire what are the causes of this defection, especially with regard to our own communion ; the blame cannot be laid merely upon Anglo-Saxon independence, and love of individual freedom, though that has played its part in weakening the sense of membership among English-speaking Christians ; the army in France with its strong consciousness of fellowship is drawn from the same race as the Church of England, and indeed some 70 per cent. of the troops are nominally Churchmen.

The last phrase suggests another factor : the principle " cujus regio ejus religio " is by no means unknown in Western Christendom, and its recognition is fatal to that earnest conviction and strenuous faith which are the true basis of Church membership ; but this reason would not account for the lack of fellowship between convinced Christians and devout Churchmen : let us narrow the scope of our inquiry to these ; for if they were to show a true *κοινωνία*, the effect upon the fringe of nominal members would be very great.

Three causes stand out prominently as contributory to disunion in the Church—partisanship, social distinctions, and suspicion between clergy and laity; let us deal briefly with each of these in turn.

(1) The Church of England is confessedly a *via media*; her boast is that it hath been her wisdom "to keep the mean between the two extremes": she represents on the religious side the hopeless illogicality and the genius for compromise which are characteristic of the race; and consequently she has room within her borders for very different types of religious expression: she has set her bounds wide; her appeal to Holy Writ deals only with what is to be *required* of her members in faith or practice, and does not exclude *voluntary* uses which may commend themselves to her children, though she has definitely ruled out certain practices which history proves to have been useless or mischievous: she requires comparatively little, she allows much. If the circumstances of her revolt from Rome gave her for the first two and a half centuries of her existence a predominantly Protestant aspect, the secession of the Methodists at the end of the eighteenth century destroyed the predominance of that element, and left room for the Oxford Movement to set the pendulum swinging to the other extreme. Both High Churchman and Low Churchman, Evangelical and Catholic, have confidently appealed to the formularies of the Church as justifying their existence within her fold: so far they have been right; but when they have gone further, and have claimed that these same formularies deny the right of their opponents to a like position, they have been untrue to the spirit of the

mother that bare them. The old Adam is not dead in the Church ; human nature is always ready to claim privileges and shirk responsibilities ; and there are few higher responsibilities which the privilege of Church membership lays upon those who enjoy it than the duty of so bearing themselves towards their brethren who claim to share the privilege, but differ in the incidence of its interpretation, as to reduce possible friction to a minimum, and, on the condition of self-denying loyalty to the society and her Lord, of agreeing to differ in peace and love. The desire to forward one's own side at all costs, and the refusal to recognise the rights of others, which are of the essence of partisanship, have much to answer for in the weakening of the sense of fellowship.

(2) There can be little question that social distinctions have done great harm ; they have attacked the Church, and the Church's counter-attack has been feeble. The very nature of the Reformation in England, working from above downwards, tended to give wealth and position an undue prominence ; and instead of democracy coming to its own first in Church government, and then spreading to the civil sphere, the process has been reversed. No one can examine the religious divisions of our country without realising how closely they correspond with certain social lines of cleavage ; the alliance between squire and parson in the country lost the Church her hold on many rural districts ; the social exclusiveness of Church circles repelled the self-made men of the Industrial Revolution ; the complacent churchmanship of the employer has often alienated the sympathies of the employed, who see

almost exclusively a wholly different side of his character. Men's religious instincts, clamantly demanding expression, have driven them to the formation of societies where they feel at home, in which their abilities find employment, and for the support of which they feel a definite responsibility. They have found fellowship by the formation of smaller societies, drawn from narrower circles, and lacking the widening influence which a truly catholic Church should exercise upon her children ; they and the Church alike have been losers by this withdrawal ; and, quite apart from the bickerings and jealousies which arise between the different bodies, unrestrained in their development by any clear sense of a common cause and a common aim, fellowship has been weakened by the separation of the religious life of the country into almost sympathy-tight compartments.

(3) The third cause which may be reckoned as operating against true fellowship is the suspicion which exists, not without some reasonable ground, between clergy and laity. Anti-clericalism is by no means unknown in England, though we may be thankful that it has not taken the openly anti-religious form in which it is found on the Continent ; it smoulders below the surface, and only blazes up occasionally, as when, to take a well-known instance, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney proposed his amending clause to the Education Bill of 1902, and brought to light what staunch supporters of the Church thought of unlimited clerical control in the elementary schools. More often it finds expression from individuals, when a layman is given his fling (too rare an occurrence) before a gathering of parsons, or

some brusque north-countryman says exactly what he thinks—and a little more—of his vicar. The layman's suspicion proceeds from various causes; from an ignorance due to lack of a frank interchange of ideas and familiar intercourse; from the autocratic position given by the parson's freehold, and its inconsiderate abuse in reckless changes and ill-considered expenditure; from the idea, not without justification, that the clergy are so certain of the rightness of their ends, that they are not always very scrupulous as to the means taken to attain them; and from the knowledge that a man who is always putting high ideals before others is in grave danger of allowing his practice to fall far short of his preaching. The parson on the other hand finds that the criticism of his work has often been made without any serious attempt to understand its difficulties, and that those who are most clamorous for a share of management and control are the least ready to bear the toil of spade-work or the burden of responsibility. But this mutual suspicion and lack of trust are a deadly atmosphere in which to grow the fair fruit of fellowship.

Such are the main apparent causes of the lack of fellowship in our own communion; how far has the experience of the war supplied a corrective?

It has certainly helped to break down the barrier of ignorance, with its resulting *suspicion*, between clergy and laity; chaplains have for the most part lived in the mess with the officers of their units, and have not infrequently changed from one unit to another. What the experience at the Base may be is a matter beyond the knowledge of the present writer; but to live in a mess with a unit on the march or in the

trenches is to be brought into very intimate contact with its members ; to eat and sleep in the same room with four or five other men does not leave much room for any mistakes as to character. The chaplain has occupied no sheltered position ; his rank, as a rule, is mediate, above, but only just above, the subaltern, and below that of the field officer : true, the traditional respect of the Regular Army for the padre has on the whole lived on, but no traditional respect will save him if he fails to " make good " by his own character and personality ; it gives him his chance and nothing more ; if he tries to win favour by lowering his own standard, he is forthwith condemned. " You can say anything you like, apparently, before our padre," was the contemptuous remark of a young staff officer ; " I can understand a ' boy,' and I can understand a ' padre,' but I can't understand a man who tries to be both," was the comment of another. But in the large majority of cases the respect and affection of those with whom he has lived have been the chaplain's reward ; suspicion or aversion has been changed into confidence. And the chaplain on the other hand has learned to revise his standard of judgment ; he has lived with men who look on life with eyes very different from his own ; he has found that some of the acts for which he has condemned others prove to be very superficial to their true character ; he has found under rough exteriors, and rougher tongues, a genuine goodness and a sincere directness which rouse his respect, a hatred for meanness and crookedness which appeals strongly to him, and a capacity for uncomplaining endurance and continuous self-sacrifice before which

he stands in wondering admiration. He has learned, as never before, to know *men*, and knowing them to respect and love them ; and so on his side as well a change has come, and the old distrust has been removed. It may be urged that the number of chaplains is very small in comparison to the vast numbers engaged, and that their influence on the life of the nation in arms must be infinitesimal ; but if the verdict of those in high command, men with special facilities for forming a judgment, is to be taken, their influence is out of all proportion to their numbers. One definite fact may be alleged in support of this assertion : early in the war the visits of the chaplain to the fighting line were viewed with suspicion and hedged with restrictions ; that suspicion and those restrictions have almost entirely vanished : one army, which at the outset of important operations limited very severely the activities of its chaplains, in less than three months withdrew all such hampering orders and, on the one reasonable condition that they did not accompany the actual waves of an attack, gave them complete freedom of action.

The reader will by this time be inclined to exclaim that the point of view taken by this Essay is an excellent illustration of the charge brought against the Church that its main interest lies among the educated and moneyed classes ; for in dealing with the removal of prejudice during the war, it has spoken only of the chaplains' relations with officers, and left the men out of view altogether. Such an objection is at first sight a weighty one, but further consideration will show that, things being as they are, the chaplains drawn like their

brethren from the educated classes, and ranking in the Army as officers, the question of breaking down prejudice among the men is intimately connected with the whole question of *social distinctions* within the Church ; and for that reason it has seemed better to reserve the question of the improvement of feeling among the men till that point is being dealt with.

The crudest prejudice amongst the men is probably that of the old Scotch gillie, who, seeing two parsons tugging at the oar, expressed his surprise, on the ground that he had always thought that " all meenisters was auld weemen " : the covert sneer in the columns of a paper more remarkable for wit and vivacity than for the accuracy of its information—that one of the signs of an attack was the number of chaplains who rolled up near the front—is perhaps a sufficient evidence that it has vanished in the light of facts.

The question of the chaplain's rank is much less easy to deal with. It is certainly useful to him in his official character ; in his dealings with the orderly room or the brigade office, in his work of organising and arranging services, he would certainly be at a distinct disadvantage without it. In his relations with the men it is rather a hindrance to be overcome ; it removes him to a distance ; the duty of frequent saluting is irksome, and certainly adds to the irritation which a certain class of man seems to feel at the very sight of a parson ; but the hindrance can be overcome : the second thoughts, at least, of that chaplain must have been a kind of devout pride to whom the reply was made, when he offered to call in an older and more experienced man, " No, thank you, sir ; if I was

talking to *him*, I should feel that I was speaking to an officer and a gentleman."

It is soon recognised that the chaplain, despite his badges,—the use of any title is against orders—is different from other officers, that he takes a more personal and unofficial interest in the men with whom he has to deal, and that he is often able to do things for which the combatant officer or doctor has no leisure. In the earlier days the organisation of canteens and recreation rooms in places as yet unreached by the Y.M.C.A. or Church Army was largely the work of the chaplain, and gave him a valuable point of contact with his flock ; these were often quaint and apparently comfortless places ; in one the only rule was that mud might be put anywhere save on the ceiling, a concession justified by the state of the trenches close behind which it lay. But soon the value of these places was officially recognised, and divisions, brigades, and even battalions, began to run their own, even then often employing the chaplain to supervise. It is hard for those who have not seen the actual conditions to realise the immense advantage to the men of having places close behind the line where at all hours hot drinks may be procured, and, when transport allows, cigarettes and other supplements to rations may be purchased.

The great meeting-place for chaplain and man was undoubtedly the trenches ; when first the request was made to be allowed to visit there, the usual reply was "Why, padre, you can't have services up there!" But there was no other opportunity of getting to know individuals of anything like equal value ; regular visiting by day, with care not to awaken the sleepers,

or distract the look-out, and an occasional night patrol, even if it were impossible to live up in the line, brought parson and flock together, one by one, as nothing else could. It has been maintained by men of long experience with much reason that this has been the greatest opportunity they have had. "I do nothing for the men, and yet they always seem glad to see me up there," was the comment of one chaplain recently; and to be a welcome visitor means that prejudice has vanished and class distinction is not felt.

But there is another side on which chaplain and man have been brought together, and that in the direct exercise of ministerial functions. Whatever may have been the case in the Regular Army, in a large number of service battalions it has been among the men that the chaplain has found the greatest response to his ministrations; officers have sometimes excused themselves for absence from services on the ground that they did not wish to spoil "the men's show." In the battalions best known to the writer, it has been the men who have given the lead in their support of Church work; they have recognised that the chaplain is out for their good, that they are his first interest and care, that their convenience is studied in the arrangement of services, and if the chaplain stands, as he usually does, for the Church in their eyes, they have come to learn that in the eyes of that Church social or official distinctions give no special claim on her services, but that she ministers without favour to all men alike. The influence of this impression on so large a proportion of the manhood of the nation as find themselves out here cannot but be felt on the country as a whole when they

return, and another of the great hindrances to fellowship will have been in some measure removed.

To turn now to the question of *partisanship*, it may be said at once that the outlook here is most hopeful; it has been conspicuous by its absence. Chaplains of every shade of opinion and school of thought have worked together without any shadow of difference; we have heard with mingled amusement and irritation that good folk at home have been exercised because an undue proportion of men of this party or that have been sent out; the question out here about any man is not "To what party does he belong?" but "Is he capable by character and life of influencing men for good, and winning them for God and His Church?" For this, the magnitude of our opportunity has been in large measure responsible; but other causes have also been at work; we have been, for our own great good, under discipline. There lies before the writer the account of a recent vestry meeting at which, when an attempt was made by the parishioners, mainly ex-office-bearers, to protest against certain changes lately made in the services, the clerical chairman closed all discussion by the remark "We are not concerned at this meeting with the worship in the church." One wonders what would have happened to the chaplain who attempted to take a similar position with the friendliest brigadier or commanding officer. We have been given wonderful freedom in the exercise of our ministry, but the discipline has been there, to restrain eccentricities and curb idiosyncrasies, and, though it has been rarely exercised, we have been the better for its presence in the background.

And it must be remembered with regard to the future that, now that a great proportion of the nation has learnt, as never before, what true discipline means, it will, less than ever, tolerate a self-assertive indiscipline on the part of the clergy. More than once the uniform worship and rigid discipline of the Roman Church have been held up as a pattern to us by thoughtful men out here; it has been easy to point out how foreign such a rigidity is to our national character, and the argument has always carried weight. But variety and elasticity are not inconsistent with discipline and reasonable submission, and these will undoubtedly be demanded of any who are going to exercise influence in the days to come.

But it is not merely discipline which has checked aberrations, and brought men almost to a common use; it is the force of circumstances which has guided many chaplains to administer the Eucharist at any hour of the day or night, in order that men under great pressure of work, or in daily peril of their lives, might not be deprived of the opportunity of making their Communion. It was a man who normally would advocate fasting Communion who, before his battalions went into action on the Somme, went round evening by evening to each company in turn, holding service, and celebrating for each, with the result that from those two battalions over one thousand men made their Communion. It is force of circumstances which has brought men, normally accustomed to a Puritan simplicity of ritual, and marked absence of ornament, to use cross and candles as they celebrated, in barn, or stable, or dug-out, that the surroundings might help to fix the minds of the

worshippers on the great purpose of their presence. It was a chaplain of undoubted Protestant upbringing, and equally unquestioned Protestant principles, who fitted up a little chapel in a front-line village, with loot, or, as he called it, salvage, from the wrecked church, so that the altar glowed with a cope of crimson velvet and cloth of gold, the walls were hung with coloured plaster of Paris reliefs of the Stations of the Cross, and the reredos presented to all eyes the legend "Ite ad Joseph." It has not been by surrender of principles that this harmony has been brought about; it has been no intolerant and ignorant toleration which has led to these results; against the danger of that attitude we have striven again and again, but we have been driven by force of circumstances to approximate to one another in that which we have found to be the *ἀδιάφορα*: we have been gently shepherded by a benevolent discipline from "every man doing that which is right in his own eyes," and we may, we believe, humbly claim that in the great task which has been committed to us, in the great opportunity with which we have been entrusted, we have been guided by the One Spirit into a harmony of co-operation, and a freedom from vexatious differences which have allowed us to work together, each as he has been led, for the building up of the Body of Christ among the manhood of our race.

And what has been of value out here may fairly be supposed to be efficacious at home. It is not that new remedies have been discovered; the old ones have been applied under new circumstances, and the new circumstances have given them an added force. There

must be the resolute setting of the good of the whole above the good of any part or section, the self-discipline and self-restraint which count harmonious co-operation as a higher thing than party advantage ; it must be made clear that the interests of the Church lie in men because they are men, not because they have position, or wealth, or education ; and there must be the patient but determined effort primarily on the part of the clergy to break down by personal intercourse and scrupulous fair dealing the barrier of suspicion between themselves and the laity.

If we may give a few moments' consideration to the question of fellowship in the Church in a larger sense, it may at once be said that the personal relations between the chaplains of the different religious bodies have on the whole been excellent ; beyond this a clear line of distinction must be drawn.

On the one hand the official recognition of the various Nonconformist bodies, and the appointment of an adequate supply of chaplains to minister to their somewhat scanty and scattered congregations, have been wholly for good ; a real grievance has been removed, and opportunities have been given for friendly co-operation and mutual support. Where the Nonconformist chaplain has been a true Nonconformist and set himself to look after his own flock, and to seek to reclaim the wanderers from any fold, relations have been of the pleasantest possible nature ; the only friction has occurred where a man has settled down with some unit, claimed it as his own, and attempted to minister to all the men therein irrespective of their real denominational connection ; such cases, always rare, have steadily tended to become

rarer. On the whole, as far as the writer's experience has gone, mutual arrangements about funerals, occasional joint services on special occasions, *e.g.*, the National Mission, or a memorial service after an action, and a general exchange of good offices have led to a real and friendly understanding, which makes for fellowship, even through and across the dividing lines.

It were much to be wished that as much could be said for relations with the Roman Communion. The contemptuous refusal of permission to use if only the naves of the churches for services will not be soon forgotten ; usually the only large buildings in the villages, the official denial of any permission to make use of them, and the rigorous watch kept to see that this refusal was enforced, have driven men to worship in barn and school, and at all seasons, even with snow upon the ground, in the open air ; it has doubled, and more than doubled, the work of the Church of England chaplains, who have often had to duplicate their services because there was no building, apart from the church, large enough to accommodate their congregations. And in another direction the same rigidity has been manifested. Two scenes live in the writer's memory. Two men of a battalion were killed up in the front line ; no Church of England chaplain could be brought up in time for the funeral before their battalion was relieved, and the Roman Catholic priest refused to say prayers over the dead, standing by the graveside while the commanding officer of the regiment read a service ; it is fair to say that this action was afterwards repudiated by a higher authority. Again, seventeen bodies were laid in a trench grave, one

Roman Catholic, one Nonconformist, and fifteen Church of England. The priest was asked in courtesy to take his service first, and the other two chaplains stood reverently by; as soon as they started their joint service, the priest moved off alone, and by the time the service was over was out of sight. If such be the spirit of the younger priests, regretfully it must be said that for the present fellowship, as far as they are concerned, is being rendered impossible.

So far the question has been looked at purely from the human side; the relations between man and man in the Divine Society have been dealt with; weaknesses have been noted, and hopeful signs pointed out. But the New Testament use of the word *κοινωνία* reminds us that in this connection human relations cannot long be treated separately from the relations of man with his God. St. Paul may emphasise the one aspect, St. John the other, but each is also conscious of another side than that on which he lays emphasis. And this must be so by the nature of the case, for that which draws men into fellowship with one another in the Church is the desire for, and the attempt to realise, fellowship with the Church's Lord. He is the magnet which draws men together, and men who have felt His influence are instinctively attracted the one to the other.

The motive forces of religion have been defined as the desire for fellowship and the sense of alienation: they are the centripetal and centrifugal forces, the play between which brings man into his due orbit of duties, centring in his Maker. Of these it may be said frankly that, for the most part, the sense of alienation has been little felt by men out here; from whatsoever cause the

barrier which sin has raised between the child and the Father has not been clearly realised. For this reason, probably, there has been a general agreement that to speak of a great religious revival among the troops is to be guilty of serious exaggeration: as the meaning of the Cross can only be realised in proportion as a man has been conscious of his "far-offness" from God, deep religious conviction has not been a common experience.

On the other hand, there has been a real awakening of the religious spirit; the desire for fellowship has been very widely felt, and very plainly expressed. The natural instinct in the hour of danger has been to turn to prayer, even among those who had long forgotten the habit; relief from danger has been expressed in the same way. A chaplain at one of the main dressing stations on the Somme resolved to offer to pray with every man of his brigade who passed through; at last among the wounded there came a young officer, of careless life and free speech, and the chaplain's courage almost failed him, but he made the offer, and was surprised by the reply "Yes, please, padre, it's just what I've been wanting"; and, the prayer said, the lad settled down on his stretcher to sleep like a little child. No one who has censored letters after units have come out from a battle can fail to have been struck with the expressions of thankfulness to God for preservation which those letters contain. It may be argued that this does not imply much; it at least is fresh evidence of the deep-seated and, under certain circumstances, irrepressible desire for fellowship with God, which it is our mission to arouse and

foster ; it should give reason for hope to the man who has been depressed by an apparent lack of response on the part of those with whom he has to deal ; and it gives a valuable ground of appeal for future service on the part of those who in the hour of stress have found relief by turning to their Father.

But the most remarkable manifestations of this desire for fellowship have occurred in connection with the great sacrament of fellowship itself : the experience of chaplains has varied very much in this matter, but there is a considerable body of evidence to show that among troops drawn from very different sections of society there has been awakened, in the face of danger, a craving for the pledge of God's companionship which is given therein : to call this cowardice is to pass a very harsh judgment, one which no man has the right to pass who has not known the intense mental and moral strain of going " over the top " under heavy shell and machine-gun fire ; for the men who have satisfied their craving have gone out to do their duty in life or death with the best of their fellows. One instance has already been given of the way in which men avail themselves of the opportunity of communicating before action ; other chaplains have discussed with the writer the difficulty of dealing with the ignorance of uninstructed communicants, whom it is yet hard to repel, as, face to face with death, they ask for the pledge of their Lord's dying love. The most striking service in the memory of the writer was one on the eve of an attack during July, 1916 : it was under a blazing sun, in a hollow among the dusty chalk hills, with four battalions bivouacking on the surrounding slopes ; a busy road,

with a railway by its side, ran past the spot; but over five hundred men gathered round for a voluntary service, and more than two hundred remained to kneel, undistracted by their surroundings, and to receive the holy Food; and next day, as the wounded drifted back through the dressing station, man after man expressed his thankfulness for the support which the sacrament had given to him in the hour of stress.

It is on this desire for fellowship with God, deep hidden in many men, yet coming to the surface in the hour of their need, that we must rely, as the foundation on which to build up the religious life, in which fellowship with man plays so large a part. That sense of fair play, which is one of the noblest heritages of our race, will make men who have relied on God in the hour of their need hesitate before they disown Him under easier conditions. And as they learn to serve Him with a loyalty such as that which they have shown to King and country, they will be drawn together by that very loyalty into a closer fellowship one with another; for "This commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

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V

FELLOWSHIP IN INDUSTRIAL LIFE

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V

FELLOWSHIP IN INDUSTRIAL LIFE

THERE are few questions more important, more bewildering, and yet more absorbingly interesting than that of "Reconstruction" after the War. I have no doubt that, if ever anyone takes the trouble to criticise this paper, one of the chief criticisms will be that it is just "Idealism." But is not this spirit the starting point of all the greatest and best things? In a leading article recently published in the *Times*, entitled "The Supreme Test," the following words appeared: "Idealism is a priceless factor in the lives of nations as of men. It raises them above themselves; it makes the Divine Spark which lies hidden in the breasts of the most commonplace, choked and smothered to all seeming by the daily round of petty tasks, of trivial pleasures, and of sordid cares. In a moment it glorifies, illuminates and transfigures. It is the great driving force of the history which it makes and unmakes with wondrous rapidity and resistless power. It is amongst the first gifts of great leaders, and, above all, of the great leaders whose mission it is to fire the imaginations, to stir the hearts, and to move the

consciences of millions. But idealism, however exalted, and however ardent, is almost worthless, or may work positive evil in such leaders, when it is not checked and balanced by clear judgment and by practical common sense." The greatest movement the world has ever known took place as a social movement when St. Peter claimed the fulfilment of the prophecy "Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams," and vindicated his idealism by the "practical common sense" with which he claimed the allegiance of all, on the ground that "the promise (of the Holy Spirit) is unto you . . . and as many as the Lord our God shall call."

It is therefore abundantly clear that if anyone hopes to do any good, to stir any enthusiasm, or to stimulate any human activities, he must approach life in a generous and optimistic spirit. There are indeed many who say "Who will show us any good?" But they are not prophets, though perhaps they may serve a useful purpose in tempering the fine cutting edge of idealism with the practical common sense which will leave it efficient, but also will make it serviceable and lasting.

In this spirit let us try to approach the great subject which the title of this paper suggests. But before going any further I must impress upon the reader the importance of remembering the limitations which the character of this book as a whole places upon the writers. It is evident that a book of essays dealing with such vast subjects as are suggested could serve no purpose unless it is clearly understood that it is an attempt on the part of chaplains who are in the thick of this great world-

struggle to suggest what contribution, if any, the revelation of the spirit, life, and activities of the men who are engaged in it has to make towards the solution of great problems. Volumes might be written upon the subject of "Industrial Fellowship" in itself, but they should be written by specialists in the subject, and this the writer of this Essay makes no sort of claim to be. The Essay will be just an attempt (not from the economic but the spiritual standpoint) to distinguish the obvious hindrances which stand in the way of "Industrial Fellowship," to see what hope the war and all it has revealed of human nature and its possibilities gives us in connection with the removal of such difficulties, and to suggest what part the Church may take in endeavouring to use the revelation which has been given in these days for the furtherance of the cause of peace at home. A Whitsuntide in France in 1917 gave wonderful meaning to the Pentecostal hymn :—

> "Anoint and cheer our soilèd face
> With the abundance of Thy grace.
> Keep far our foes, give peace at home ;
> Where Thou art guide no ill can come."

The great struggle in which we are engaged is a struggle to secure the happiness and peace of the world. And yet even when such a statement as this is made we are conscious at once that it presents us with baffling and bewildering thoughts. It seems hard to believe that the brutal and horrible method of warfare can be the ideal method for securing so noble an end. We are driven to acknowledge that this seems at the present stage of human development to be the only practical means open to us by which to secure a

great object. And further there are many who find themselves honestly unable to accept the happiness of the world as the object for which we are fighting. They are convinced that material ends and aims are what really are inspiring and influencing the British Empire in these days. But this is exactly where the idealistic view is of such vital importance. We could do no greater wrong to the thousands who have made and are making the "great sacrifice," and to the even greater number who against all selfish and natural instincts have encouraged them in their devotion to a high and noble call, than to suggest that such a God-like spirit had a sordid end in view. Men may do brave deeds for ignoble ends, but it is scarcely thinkable that men and women should give what is dearer to them than life itself for selfish ends and should glory in doing so. Again and again one has met men out here who have repudiated warmly any very high aim and purpose as being behind their response to the call of duty, but one scarcely ever fails to find that this attitude is but the cloak of a noble and unassuming nature. We should take it amiss (and there would be every cause for our resentment) if other nations accused us of being fired by low or selfish aims. We should claim the right to be judged by our best men and their motives. I write these words because I cannot help feeling that the industrial world is largely suffering from just such a manifest handicap due to the incompleteness of the development of human relationships, and from the refusal on the part of very many to attribute any but sordid motives to those who uphold the cause of the industrial world.

Why should we resent strikes or lock-outs (I do not of course mean in war-time) as the weapons of the industrial world so long as we feel conscientiously justified in resorting to warfare as a means of bringing about peace and happiness? Why should we be so ready to say that the workers care for nothing but a rise in their own wages and a share in somebody else's wages, or that the aim of the capitalist is to use human machines to inflate profits, so long as we are indignant if mere material ends are suggested as the object of the great struggle in which we stand side by side until victory is assured?

We claim for ourselves as a nation in these days a generous and kindly judgment of our methods and motives, but we are well aware that time alone will show whether such an estimate is deserved or not. May we not hold that the industrial world in its struggle for power and influence has an equal right to appeal to the tribunal of coming years for a vindication of its methods and motives? We have faith that if this great war gives to our Empire a position and influence such as she never had before she will use them for the glory of God and the happiness of His people. Can we not have equal faith that when the industrial world has secured position and influence they will be used for similarly noble ends?

I.

WHAT LABOUR AND CAPITAL ARE WORKING FOR.

This brings us to the question as to what labour is really striving for—a question which is of vital import-

ance, since there can be no lasting foundation for industrial fellowship either between capital and labour or in the ranks of labour, other than a clear understanding of the ideals and aims of the parties concerned.

Our hope for the future happiness and well-being of the industrial world rests solely upon the harmonious co-operation of capital and labour, and this will only be secured by a mutual understanding of their respective ideals and difficulties. Judged by their best exponents, labour and capital are both out for the same end—" the happiness of the whole." The root desire of labour is for " opportunity," and opportunity of the noblest kind, the " lifting of millions out of material misery to a manner of life satisfying to themselves and worthy of human beings," the " opening to millions and millions the door to the highest values of life."

" Man doth not live by bread alone." The unrest in the industrial world to-day has not its roots solely in poverty and want. There is something deeper still at work. The wage-earners are filled with a vague but profound sentiment that the industrial system, as it is now, denies to them the liberties, opportunities, and responsibilities of free men. The heart of the difficulty is not wages or hours of work, but the general status of labour, its insecurity, and its lack of freedom in the ordering of its own life. Labour feels itself to be always oppressed and on the defensive, and it desires to " secure the initiative " and thereby gain freedom of action and possibility of unrestricted growth and development. The demand of labour is a demand to be put upon a higher level, a level which

is not of necessity selfish, but where the opportunity for self-devotion really begins. Labour has never conceived of itself as engaged simply in a struggle for ascendancy, and for the material fruits which ascendancy would bring with it; its aim is to remove what denies and does violence to humanity.

And, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that there are hosts of capitalists who regard their wealth as a trust, their employees as men with souls, and not as "hands" or machines, and who are genuinely anxious in the conduct of their business to seek the happiness of the whole. It will at least tend to encourage a hopeful spirit in our attitude towards the great industrial problem if we recognise the fact that the best exponents of the ideals of both labour and capital have a common object, the happiness of the whole, which is the Christ-ideal, "I am come that they might have life and that they may have it more abundantly," and that it is the failure of many to fulfil their ideals, not the ideals themselves, which stands in the way of peace at home.

II.

WHAT CAPITAL AND LABOUR NEED.

Capital and labour are having the truth brought home to them that they are complementary to each other, and that in their fellowship lies the hope of the industrial world in the future. This does not, however, mean that self-interest is to be the basis of that fellowship, or that so noble an ideal is to be merely utilitarian in its attainment. Capital and labour will secure the

happiness as well as the prosperity of the industrial world when each learns that the will to love is stronger than the will to power. A beautiful article appeared in the *Times* Literary Supplement for March 15th, 1917, entitled " Wilfulness and Wisdom." The writer of the article pointed out that " the German has chosen to glorify openly and to carry to a logical extreme the peculiar error of the whole Western world —the belief that the highest function of man is to work his will upon people and things outside him, that he can change the world without changing himself. The Christian doctrine, preached so long in vain and now almost forgotten, is the opposite of this. It insists that man is by nature a passive, an experiencing creature, and that he can do nothing well in action unless he has first learned a right passivity. . . . His will, in fact, must be the will to love, which is the will to experience in a certain way ; and out of that will to love right action will naturally ensue. . . . But it is the very lack of experiencing power that drives men of great energy to violent action . . . and there is a profound weakness in this very refusal of experience, in their incapacity to be aware of men or things except as they are of use to them."

The writer goes on to speak of Napoleon as a man who " lost the sense of any reality whatever except his own action ; he saw the world as a passive object to be acted upon by himself." He further instances the mechanical devices of the war as showing that we " see internal reality as a material for us to work in " and as the expression of the fact that " the will for action has ousted the will to experience."

Now is it not true to say that the attitude of mind expressed by the term "will to experience" sums up all the very qualities which we feel are essential needs of the industrial world to-day? Are not these the qualities which are needed as the basis of a real industrial fellowship: sympathy, discipline, education, and above all a sense of God? These are the qualities which will enable both the working man and the capitalist to grasp the fact and make it a real factor in their mutual relations; that not merely in a blind enforcement of their wills upon existing conditions, but in a changed outlook, lies the hope of the happiness of the whole. The change must come in men and their attitude as well as in things. "Reverence," "the will to experience," or "receptivity," are all terms which suggest the common root from which spring those qualities which are so patently needed to-day. Sympathy will lead men to see each other's point of view, ideals, and difficulties. Discipline will govern on the one hand excess profits and on the other restricted output. Education (if truly education) will develop *esprit de corps*, a wider and more human outlook, and foster that sense of God which will prevent materialism from holding the field both as the method of reform as well as the ideal of life.

III.

WHAT THE WAR IS DOING.

The fact that the Great War found us as a nation unprepared and pre-occupied has had at least one advantage—it has enabled us to see in a most striking

way the effect of the crash upon us as we actually were. Our unpreparedness has made the revelations of the war more definite and clear-cut. Men came from the slums or the ball-rooms of our great city and by their wonderful heroism, dogged tenacity, and ready spirit of self-sacrifice revealed almost in a flash the unsuspected possibilities and undreamed-of capacities which lay dormant in human nature. The call was big enough to bring out all that was best and noblest in our men and to kill much that was mean and unworthy. And I believe that it is this revelation of the possibilities in other men which has been the foundation of the very real fellowship which has been developed during these years of war. True it is that a common end in view, common dangers, common hardships, common victories, common reverses, a common system of discipline, common catchwords, jokes and songs, and a common life have done much to break down barriers and open the hearts of men to men, and of class to class. Yet I firmly believe that the most real contribution which the war has made to fellowship has been the revelation of men to each other, the fact that " all sorts and conditions of men " have been enabled, nay, compelled, to see each other as they really are ; for nothing so clearly reveals men as they are like war. The war and the life we live out here have stimulated the " will to experience," and we are " learning to learn " every day and under all kinds of circumstances. The war is dealing shrewd blows every day to prejudice, criticism, and suspicion ; blows from which, please God, these evil spirits may find it hard to recover, and which will prevent them

from again taking their usurped places in the fighting line of the forces of evil. Nothing has such power to change one's prejudices about men or classes as to be under shell fire with them, to spend week after week with them in rat-infested dug-outs or water-logged trenches, to go up into the air with them, or to see the spirit in which they daily face hazards by land or air. Prejudice, that subtle enemy of progress, is receiving rough handling out here. New and untried men of all kinds and classes are continually coming out to battalions, batteries, or squadrons, and again and again undreamed-of qualities are revealed by them under the searching test of warfare. We thought they " didn't look up to much," and the next moment they strike us dumb by some gallant deed or by their dogged endurance. Whether we are finding that purses can be made out of sows' ears, or that what we thought was a sow's ear was something of very different fibre, I cannot tell—at any rate the fact remains that we are certainly developing our teachability in a most wonderful way. The war has given us the chance of standing side by side with each other in our own naked manhood with so many of the trimmings of common life removed, and as a result our preconceived estimates have to go to the wall. And this is true on both sides. The war has brought many of the " submerged tenth " for the first time in their lives into close touch with the " idle rich," while it has led many of the well-to-do to rub shoulders with the poorer classes in a way which they have never done before. It is in valour, in deeds of heroism and lives of endurance, that the common manhood proves its existence, and, short of death,

perhaps the V.C. is the greatest leveller we know, for it overrides all social or class distinctions. And it points out to us the true line of approach to each other. You cannot *patronise* a man who does the sort of thing one sees done every day out here; you can only reverence him and try to learn from him; and true fellowship must be based on mutual reverence and respect, upon an attitude of mind and heart which, thank God, the war is doing so much to give us. The Bishop of Stepney writes in his little book, "In the Day of Battle":—

"And what about our social relations? the bitterness that has parted rich from poor? the contempt of class for class? Shall we ever revive the old scorn with which we looked one upon another? Will people talk any more about 'the idle rich,' the 'degraded poor'? One hardly knows which is the more splendid figure at the present moment. Is it the young officer, with all the happy memories of Public School and University behind him, with the brightest future England can offer ahead of him, with all the wonderful joy and vigour of his early manhood? His men are praying him in vain to take just a bit more care. Yet he runs the risks he will not let them run. He courts the danger which he bids them avoid. He seems to care so much for them, so little about himself. We read the grievous loss of officers in the casualty lists. It would take many years of effort, it would take more than an eternity of talk, to remove the suspicions, the distrusts, which self-effacing gallantry of that sort drives clean away. Or is it the lad from nowhere in particular, brought up anyhow, a 'bad' start in life;

'bad' environment, with everything against him; spoiled, you would say, by their regularities, broken by the disheartenment of uncertain, ill-paid work? You little knew what was in him when you spoke scornfully of him, or swept up him and the like of him in your summary of despair. For after all he is the man who stands firm and fearless in that iron wall of heroic resistance, to which you owe your safety, your very life. He is the man who shares his last drop of water with the dying German; whom the women and children of the terror-stricken villages welcome and love. He is the man who can face the worst and face it with a smile.

"Class prejudice! it does not always find expression in contemptuous words; it often lies silent in our hearts. It is at the roots of our false judgments, our thoughtless disregard, our unwillingness to know and understand, the blundering condescension of our philanthropy, our suspicion of those who wanted to be kind."

And then too the war has not only transvalued our values by making us realise that service is the greatest thing in the world, for the only man for whom we "have no use" is the man who isn't "doing his bit," but it has revealed the spirit of unselfish service to be a very happy thing. I believe that the secret of the indomitable cheerfulness of our men under all sorts of impossible conditions has its roots in the happiness which comes from the consciousness that they are "doing their bit" for others or have made a really unselfish offering for others. It is this knowledge which causes men to glory in tribulation, which makes "Bill"

and "Alf," who have each lost an arm, sit side by side at the concert at the C.C.S., "so as we can 'ave a clap." "Bill puts 'is 'and out and I smacks it with mine!"

And we must not forget that not a little is being done to develop that spirit which is represented by the expressions "honour of the shop" or "pride in the firm," and which would clear away so many difficulties in the way of industrial fellowship. The friendly rivalry which exists between companies, flights, and the like, is making men take pride in their job, and is doing in narrower circles what the war is doing for the nation, developing *esprit de corps* without which fellowship is impossible.

Finally the war has shown us that, although character and common manhood are levellers which know no exceptions, we need have no fears lest the acceptance of this criterion may mean the abolition of discipline. No one who has been privileged to see or know anything of our Canadian brothers can doubt this. You cannot see much of the Canadians without loving them and admiring them, and several of them have told me quite openly that they realise the fact that discipline was at first somewhat lacking amongst them, but that they have not only learned the importance of it, but have achieved it in a wonderful degree. The experiment in democracy which has been made throughout all our armies is specially noticeable amongst the Colonial troops, and it is an experiment which has surely been extraordinarily successful. Democracy has shown itself capable of being trusted and has proved itself to be possessed of powers of self-discipline

as well as of self-reliance. If we are patient we may yet see a similarly successful experiment made in the Russian Army. This fact will hearten us to meet any possible developments in industrial life.

When summing up the lessons of the war we must beware of an unfounded optimism.

In the extremely valuable and interesting publication by the "Garton Fellowship" entitled "Memorandum on the Industrial Situation After the War," the following words appear :—

"There is a prevalent belief that the 'brotherhood of the trenches' and workshops, the spirit of co-operation and self-sacrifice which has made possible our efforts in the War, will remain as a permanent factor in our national life. A great deal has been said of the effect of discipline upon the men who have served at the front, and it is widely assumed that on their return they will be more amenable to management and less responsive to agitation. Those who argue thus do so mostly on general principles and probabilities. But it is no use arguing that certain conditions *ought* to produce certain effects if the facts show that they *do not.* There is evidence that many of the men who return from the trenches to the great munition and ship-building centres are, within a few weeks of their return, amongst those who exhibit most actively their discontent with present conditions. Among those who have fought in Flanders or who have been employed in making shells at home, there are many who look forward to a great social upheaval following the War. To some this may be distressing and almost incredible. The facts remain, and the facts must be faced."

Yes, it would, indeed, be a mistake to assume that the discipline to which men have been subjected in the Army will operate in the direction of making them more ready to " take it lying down " when they are no longer under the restraint of such discipline ; nor, indeed, would it be fair to measure the effects of the War by the conduct of men who have exchanged the strain of the trenches for the, in many ways, equal strain of the munition factory.

Time, rest, and altered conditions will be necessary before the new spirit can make itself felt—that spirit which will gradually bring about a better relationship between employer and employed, and so achieve the hand-in-hand advance of character and environment.

Because the nation presents a united front now and fellowship is a *fait accompli* out here, it does not follow of necessity that a solution has been found of the difficulties which loomed so largely at home before the war and which even since the outbreak of war have raised their heads ; but we cannot help feeling that a great change has been wrought and that all may be summed up in the fact that we are learning receptivity.

A readiness to see the other side, to make allowances, to work for the happiness of the whole, to serve joyfully, and in the free spirit of self-discipline, are products of the war, are the signs of a greater receptivity, and will, please God, be brought home by our men to pave the way to a happier industrial life after the war.

As " A Student in Arms " writes, " When the war is over, and the men of the citizen army return to their

homes and their civil occupations, will they, I wonder, remember the things that they have learnt ? If so, there will be a new and better England for our children. One would like to prophesy great things. In those days great talkers and boasters shall be of no account, for men shall remember that in the hour of danger they were wanting. In those days there shall be no more petty strife between class and class, for all shall have learnt that they are one nation, and that they must seek the nation's good before their own. In those days men shall no longer pride themselves on their riches, or on the material possessions which distinguish them from their brethren, for they shall have learnt that it is the qualities of the heart which are of real value.

" Men shall be prized for their courage, their honesty, their charity, their practical ability. In those days there shall be no false pride, for all have lived hardly, all have done dirty and menial work, all have wielded pick and spade, and have counted it no dishonour but rather glory to do so. In those days charity and brotherly love shall prevail mightily, for all shall have learnt mutual understanding and respect."

IV.

WHAT THE CHURCH CAN DO.

It is up to the Church to spiritualise the ideals of the industrial world ; to see that the New Jerusalem has a height equal to its length and breadth. The Church and the industrial world are at one in their ideal—the happiness of the whole ; the Church must

never fail to uphold the facts that without God prosperity may be attainable, but never happiness ; that the motive of the happiness of the whole must include the happiness and glory of God Who is One of the whole, for He is their Father, and that only through Him is such an ideal attainable.

And if the Church is to exert any influence it will only be by her learning receptivity—by her learning to see men as they really are, by trusting them, by understanding the difficulties of rich and poor alike. Donald Hankey says : " We are willing to do things for the poor, but we are not willing, we are shocked and grieved, when the poor try to do something for themselves. . . . We will not admit the right of the labourer to freedom and opportunity and self-respect, though we are willing to give him instalments by way of charity." Until we have learnt to learn, our worship can have no plain and evident relation to the lives of men, and Churchmen will merely seem to be impossible people with a patronising attitude towards many whose lives and devotion are infinitely superior to our own.

I was privileged to see a letter to a friend from one who is in close touch with industrial life, and he writes : " The Church ought not to attach itself or hold aloof from any movement of national importance. The message of the Church goes deeper than any movement, and the parson who sees his whole duty in forwarding. Socialism or land reform or defending the Establishment is obviously a shallow person . . . on the other hand, for the Church to hold aloof from causes and movements which command the enthusiasm and un-

selfish devotion of thousands is to imitate the priest and the Levite and pass by on the other side.

" The business of the Church towards movements is surely the same as towards individuals—to take them as they are—understand their needs and difficulties, find out their best side and help it as much as ever it can. Sympathy and encouragement from ' outsiders ' are worth a tremendous lot to labour people and may save them from falling into bitterness and hatred. It is quite true that they often make their appeal on low grounds, but they will do it less in so far as they are better men, and that is just where the Church can help them. The same is true of restriction of output—which is also not confined to workmen. Anyone who takes a salary for work inefficiently done, *e.g.* a teacher who does not prepare his lessons or keep abreast of his subject, or the business man who takes overlong week-ends, is guilty of the same."

And again we must be thorough and practical in our sacrifices if we are to commend our religion. It is often stated that the chief reason for the neglect of religion is the fact that the Church is other-worldly and seems to take but little interest in the things of this world; but I venture to suggest that a more genuine reason is to be found in the fact that for all her spiritual ideals she appears to the man of the world to be keeping a keen eye on things temporal. Religion finds a rebuke as well as a suggestion in the following " Limerick ":—

There was an old lady of Leeds
Who tried, in turn, all of the Creeds,
When, disgusted, she found
That each left her aground,
She attended to other folks' needs.

It is the very thoroughness of the spirit of self-sacrifice to-day which has given to it its joy and gladness, and we must learn to "live dangerously." There are hosts of men of good will ready to side with religion if only they saw it in its proper glory; clear in its aim, strong in its purpose, undaunted and unashamed; claiming for Christ that which belongs to Him—that dominion over the hearts and lives of all men, at all times, in all places, and in all things, which is His right.

Nor must we forget, as the Bishop of Winchester has said, "The harder social problems need the disentangling and the solving, which can only be wrought by men and women who find the Divine secrets of disinterested life, and moral courage, and insistent equity."

In conclusion, let us approach the great problem of industrial fellowship with patience, but with a great and hopeful heart after the experiences of the last three years. When the War is over what will live on will be the spirit men showed and what it cost them rather than the results achieved. The doing of a thing is always of more value than the thing done, and in the achievement of industrial fellowship is a field for the development of national character and Christianity. God, Who is ever striving to bring good out of evil, has allowed us to see in war a force which whilst it destroys men creates manhood, and He has opened the door to a wider fellowship, through which we must and shall pass, which leads to the happiness of the whole and therefore to His glory.

VI

MEMBERSHIP AND LOYALTY

By the Rev. GEOFFREY GORDON, M.A.

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VI

MEMBERSHIP AND LOYALTY

War has been for all of us a time of new experiences, and so, except for those whose minds are hermetically sealed by shell-proof bias and fact-resisting prejudice, these years have been a time of learning. New experiences sometimes teach new truth. More often they give new insight into truths so old that they had been forgotten. For many, the most intense of these new experiences has been the facing of frequent and prolonged bodily fear. Before the war the criminal and the schoolboy knew its meaning, but as civilisation had driven the robber from about our paths and the burglar from beneath our beds, bodily fear had become, for most of us, an unfamiliar thing. We were sometimes startled by motor bicycles, we were nervous of the dentist, but intense and prolonged fear was not within the range of our experience. But now, for those of us who have lived the life of the trenches, it has become a common experience, as familiar as it was to our ancestors before peace and the protecting policeman had smoothed the path of man.

Faced with this new experience, we have seen new meaning in a very old truth. We have learnt that so long as men are thinking about themselves they cannot escape from fear, but when their thoughts are dominated by the sense of responsibility for others, or by the claims of their work, fear almost always vanishes, or, if it does not vanish, at any rate ceases to affect their actions. All ranks alike have discovered in these days of war that self-centredness is the root of fear, and that self-forgetfulness is essential to physical courage ; and perhaps this has helped us to relearn the ancient truth that self-forgetfulness is the secret, not of courage alone, but of all human virtue.

In spite of the many demoralising and degrading effects of war, there has come into the world a greatly increased power of self-forgetfulness both among soldiers and among those at home, and this self-forgetfulness is the cause of whatever of good there is in the character results which have emerged in these bewildering years.

In theory, all Christians would admit at once the need of self-forgetfulness. It is absolutely central to the teaching of our Lord. By word and by more powerful example, He taught the doctrine of sacrifice. The paradox that a man must lose himself in order to find himself is repeated in slightly varying forms more often than any other saying in the Gospels. It is obviously crucial, and yet in most of our religious teaching it has been relegated to the realm of the unpractical or else explained away.

The greater part of Protestant teaching is frankly individualistic and self-centred. It has descended

through steady gradations of selfish prayers and anti-social hymns, till it reaches its final degradation in that definitely and shamelessly un-Christian chorus which was recently so popular at Revivalist meetings—"That will be glory—glory for me." Such teaching is perhaps more longsighted and wiser than teaching which fixes man's hopes on commercial gain or individual advancement in this world, but, in its nature, it is identical, for selfishness does not cease to be selfish because its gains are transferred from the balance of this world to the pay-sheet of the world to come.

Catholic teaching lays much more stress on the corporate ideal, but here also the obligations of loyalty and membership are more often than not used as means to individual ends, and the driving motive is selfish rather than social.

If the Church is to become again a great force in human affairs she must somehow recover the secret of all virtue, that forgetfulness of self which was central to the teaching of her Lord, but which His Protestant followers have so largely forgotten, and which His Catholic servants have so often misused.

War has shown us the character-building power of an appeal which is utterly divorced from any selfish motive, an appeal which is essentially social and corporate. Men point to the demoralising effects of war; it is not these that are surprising. The marvel is that out of war any good has come at all. Good has come, and it is due almost entirely to the fact that men have in these years been living not for self but for a cause.

What exactly the cause is which has really stirred

men's loyalty it would be difficult adequately to define. Men have become self-forgetful because they have attained to a sense of membership and because they have been inspired by loyalty; but it is not a single loyalty nor an exclusive membership that has moved them.

We have all been stirred at times by a vague feeling that we are out for a world-wide cause, the service of civilisation, the maintenance of ideals of truth, honour, justice and right dealing between the nations. This vague allegiance has not had to stand alone; it has been reinforced by our new-found patriotism, for however lamely we express it, the fact that we are fighting and working for England has made a real difference.

The Cause has had real character-building results, but fighting for civilisation and for England would not have had the same effects on the combative mind of man unless it had also a negative aspect. It is the determination to beat the Germans which has given force and doggedness to our loyalty. The consciousness of fighting *for* a cause is immensely reinforced by the consciousness of fighting *against* a clearly recognised enemy.

Nor has our sense of membership had to find its only satisfaction in loyalty to the Grand Alliance of Civilisation and to England. We are all proud of being members of the British Army in the field and are jealous for its honour, and still more for the honour of the unit to which we directly belong. Other people, for instance, have their own ideas about the comparative excellence of different divisions. I know, without any

possibility of doubt, which is *The* Division pre-eminent among them all. I have known, also, which was the best brigade, and I have had more than a suspicion as to which was the best regiment in that brigade. A chaplain's personal certainties do not go to the lower subdivisions, but other men are not less passionately loyal to particular companies and even platoons and sections. Nor is that intimate sense of membership in one particular unit altogether jest. Any mention of the *n*th Division stirs in me really deep feelings—feelings which are akin to the religious emotions, in that they spring from the very depths of my being. If such feelings of membership and loyalty can be aroused in us who are perhaps only attached for a few months, one can understand the self-obliterating force of a membership which lasts for half a lifetime.

These lesser loyalties are not in any way inconsistent with the larger loyalty to the great cause. The sense of being a member of a particular platoon does not prevent a man from being conscious of his membership of the greater whole. Lesser loyalties have of course their dangers, but they are risks which, if the spirit of membership and loyalty is to flourish, must inevitably be run. Obstructive regimentalism is not altogether unknown; company jealousy sometimes runs to dangerous extremes. But the man who really cares for his regiment nearly always learns devotion to the larger whole, and A company's contempt for B company's wiring does not greatly interfere with their joint work.

The soldier lives in a series of concentric circles, and they all claim his loyalty without necessary competi-

tion and without exclusiveness ; but they all lack force and magnetism unless there is, in their claim, an element of personality. Personal leadership has had a strong influence on character throughout the war. In the tense emotions of the early months, the character of King Albert was a really important influence. Our own King and Lord Kitchener have evoked unsuspected capacities in the men of our race ; but the part that has been played by personal leadership has been increasingly large lower down, in the smaller of the concentric circles. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the influence of company commanders and platoon leaders.

All that is best in our soldiers has been brought out by their self-giving to a Cause ; by their sense of membership in various corporate wholes ; by greater and lesser loyalties. These loyalties reinforced by personal allegiance to leaders great and small have helped to overcome that self-centredness which is the enemy of all true human progress.

This corporate claim, of the value of which we have received such overwhelming evidence, is to a great extent unheard or unrecognised in contemporary religion ; and it is the practical absence of this appeal which accounts for the abstention of the best of those who remain outside all organised religion—to the damage of the Cause and to their own great loss.

It may be worth while to pay a round of parochial visits in an ordinary parish at home and from these to form some estimate as to the attitude of a typical working-class constituency to their Church ; and it will be illuminating on such a round to have always

in the back of our minds the conception of the Church as an army out to beat the Devil just as the British Army is out to beat the Kaiser.

On such a round the home parson will find some splendidly keen supporters, some really Christian families; visits such as these give him immense encouragement and are as springs of water in dry places; but for our present purposes we must not linger over these. In a parish where he has not yet had time to form those personal friendships which break down prejudice, he will find the majority of households indifferent if not hostile. Indeed it has been one of the joys of chaplains' work out here that our reception has been so very different from that to which we were accustomed at home. The recently arrived pastor visiting his flock as vicar or curate of a parish in England certainly could not count on a hearty welcome at any large proportion of the houses which he visited. The same pastor visiting his flock in the trenches, as their padre, even though newly appointed and a total stranger, is almost sure of a generous reception and the often embarrassing offer of a share in the latest parcel from home, and a mugful of tea from the ubiquitous dixie.

Leaving aside the welcoming families with whom it is so tempting to stay, let us pay a series of visits to more typical houses at which our reception will be indifferent or hostile.

At some houses our knock will elicit no answer; a face may appear for a moment at the window and a curtain may shake, but a second knock will win no further response. These, too, we must leave on one

side, for there is no compulsion for the cause of God, there are no conscripts in His army.

At No. 1 our knock is answered almost at once, for the master of the house happens to be in the front passage at the moment of our call. Directly he sees that the visitor is the parson he calls the missus—"Mother, here's the gentleman from the church to see you"; and we have considerable difficulty in persuading him that the object of our visit is as much to see him as to see his wife. The conception of the Church as a fighting army makes this very common attitude seem more than ordinarily irrational. Without in any way wishing to minimise the splendid work which women have done in the last three years, it is obvious that we should have made a poor show against the Germans if the Army had been recruited from women only. If less obvious, it is not less certain that the militant Church will make but little headway against the forces of evil, if her work is regarded as exclusively the women's concern.

At No. 2 the woman who opens the door greets us civilly enough. A shadow crosses her face for an instant. She had hoped it was the milk- or the cat's-meat-man, but she is too polite to express in words her disappointment that it is only the parson. She invites us in, and we find her husband, a prosperous artisan, sitting in his shirt sleeves by the kitchen fire. We have not come in anything like an accusing spirit, but almost at once he is on the defensive. "I live a decent sort of life, I do. I never do anyone any 'arm. I'm a good living chap. I've never done any 'arm to anyone." The phrase "never done any

'arm " recurs with wearisome frequency. " No harm " —what an ideal for the free soul of man ; and yet over and over again it is uttered as if it were the summit of human perfection.

Apply to it the Army conception. Imagine a German attack. The sergeant going round the line finds one of his men sitting on the fire-step smoking his pipe. The sergeant's language is unprintable in a book by chaplains. " What's the matter, sergeant ? I 'aven't done any 'arm, 'ave I ? What's all the row about ? I 'aven't done anything wrong." The sergeant would not take long to explain the uselessness, for a soldier, of such an ideal. It is not less inadequate for a Christian.

On the walls of the sitting-room at No. 3 we notice that there hang several Sunday-school certificates, and behind the glass doors of a rarely opened bookcase there are one or two highly-treasured prizes granted for " proficiency in religious knowledge." This man is ready enough to talk, and he tells us with pride of his success in Sunday school and Bible class and club. " I used to have a lot to do with the Mission round the corner, and I used to go regularly to church—but I gave it up because somehow I didn't seem to get any good out of it."

His proficiency in religious knowledge does not seem to have made him acquainted with the text " It is more blessed to give than to receive " ; but if you compare the Church to a fighting army the irrelevance of such an objection becomes overwhelmingly obvious. The man who joined the Army to get something out of it would be thought half-witted ;

you join not to get but to give, in one of the finest phrases in our modern language, "to do your bit."

At No. 4 the sight of the parson provokes at once a torrent of antagonistic self-praise. "I can be good by myself. I don't need to go to church. I can be as good as any of them folks without joining on to them."

Can a man be "good" by himself? I very much doubt it; but I am quite sure that even if by himself he can *be* good, he cannot by himself *do* good, or at any rate that he cannot do nearly as much good by himself as he could in co-operation with others. The Army has made that abundantly clear—a well-disciplined and united regiment acting in close union would be more than a match for many times the same number of men acting in isolation from one another.

The householder at No. 5 takes a slightly different line. He does not want to be good on his own, but he is impatient of the formalism of the Church and has thrown himself eagerly into the activities of a little Bethel in the neighbourhood.

The imagination staggers before the thought of the number of different and independent units which would have sprung into being if every "grouser" in the Army had thought that dissatisfaction with red tape and formalism justified him in starting or joining some irregular force under independent command. All such bodies might have the same fundamental purpose, all their men might be moved with the same zeal for beating the enemy, they might all be "going the same way," but the victory of the Germans over the British Army would have been as easy as is the victory of the Devil over the divided forces of Christ.

These five visits would, I believe, be recognised by most parochial clergy as affording not unfair examples of common objections to the Church which they hear on their visits at home. There are four others which we hear more commonly out here, but which are on much the same lines.

(*a*) " Well, sir, I like the services out here and the Church is all right, but our parson at home, sir, . . . ! You couldn't go to church or have anything to do with him."

Perhaps his parson at home is . . . ! many of us are . . . !! very much so. But if you think of the Church as an army the poorness of an officer is all the more reason for effort on the part of the rank and file. A badly led company will probably never be very effective, but every soldier would admit that if the officer is useless the sergeant-major must carry on, and if he is inefficient, the other non-commissioned officers and men must make extra efforts to do without the leadership which is their right.

(*b*) Again, we meet men who profess to believe in Jesus Christ, but who admit that they are too slack to take any active part for His service. British opinion formed no hesitating opinion as to the moral worth of men who believed in England but were too mean-spirited to serve her in her hour of need.

(*c*) There are many who, while believing in Christ and having a wish, if not a will, to follow Him, are held back by a consciousness of unworthiness due often to some definite sin. " Christ is the world's Saviour, but His work is not for such as I." Men find it very hard to grasp the central miracle of Christianity, the

miracle of forgiveness. They find it hard to take Christ quite simply at His word, and to believe in the possibility of the new start, the possibility of a real usefulness in those who have sinned deeply. These years of war should have shown us the inherent potentialities latent in many whom the world deemed wastrels. The weedy, narrow-chested clerk has attained physical strength from army drill and discipline. The careless good-for-nothing has often developed a moral courage which has astonished himself not less than his friends.

(*d*) Then there is that last obstacle which among Englishmen is perhaps the most important of all; important by reason of the numbers that it keeps away and still more important by reason of their quality. The fear of hypocrisy is the great conscientious objection which keeps so many out of the army of Christ, and large numbers of those thus rendered non-combatant are the sincerest and the best, the very men whom most we want.

It is worth while to examine a little this idea of hypocrisy which has in men's minds so attached itself to the profession of religion. The average man is, I think, inclined to suspect that the majority of religious people are more or less hypocrites. But it is worth remembering that the ordinary German is convinced that the majority not only of religious Englishmen but of all Englishmen are equally hypocritical. Does not this utterly unfair judgment rest in both cases on the same fallacy? Is it not due to an assumed division of mankind into the good and the bad—to an anticipation in this life of the division into the sheep and the goats which the Bible postpones till the final Judgment

Day ? If to be religious meant to be good, then every-one of us failing, stumbling Christians is a hypocrite indeed. If, however, as our prayers and hymns indicate, to be religious means not that you are good but that you are trying to be good, the accusation falls to the ground. The true division, in this life, is not between the good and the bad, but between those who try and those who have given up.

We Englishmen are fighting for freedom, for honour, for purity and justice. The German knows how far we are from living up to those ideals, and therefore to profess them seems to him sheer hypocrisy. He has set himself a low ideal and lives strenuously up to it, and he despises a race whose ideal seems so far out of reach. We are not hypocrites, so long as we are sincere in aiming at the great ideals which we profess, however far we may be from their attainment.

We have paid our round of visits and we have met with nine different reasons which account for the abstention of men from organised religion. Others, of course, are kept away by definitely intellectual disbelief, or by wilful wickedness ; but I am convinced that the real problem before the Church is not so much with these, as among the much larger numbers of men of good will who are not actively opposed to us, but who are indifferent to the Church for one or more of the nine reasons which we have been considering. (1) There is the attitude which regards religion as a matter exclusively for women ; (2) there is the satisfaction with the negative attitude of harmlessness ; (3) there is abstention on the ground that no particular benefit is apparently being received ; (4) there is the absence

of the sense of the need of any co-operation at all ; (5) there is the preference for co-operation with some irregular force ; (6) there is discontent with the official leader in the locality ; (7) there is sheer slackness ; (8) there is the sense of unworthiness ; and (9) there is the deep-rooted sense that to profess an unrealised ideal is somehow hypocritical. All these are, I believe, common objections and account for the abstention of the majority of those men of good will whose co-operation the Church so sorely needs. If you consider them, in the light of the conception that the Church is an army out for an ideal and out to beat the Devil, just as the British Army is out for a cause and out to beat the Kaiser, every single one of those nine typical objections falls to the ground.

Now that is surely a very significant and a very suggestive fact. It does not mean, of course, that if such a conception of the Church was widely taught and generally accepted, all these objections would be immediately abandoned. Every clergyman knows that ingrained prejudices will operate long after every rational foundation for them has been admittedly surrendered. But it does suggest that a large shifting of emphasis on to that aspect of the Church would, in time, produce results which it is impossible to overestimate.

I have tried to make two definite points, to establish two clearly-defined propositions.

I. That the best character results of war have come, in the main, from the self-obliterating power of membership in one or more of several corporate bodies pledged to accomplish a common ideal. (It is a significant

fact that the word 'unit' is now applied not to the individual, but to the regiment or other body to which the individual belongs. The individual is no longer the unit. He is a part "doing his bit" of the larger whole.)

II. That (leaving on one side wilful opposition or deliberate shirking) the objections which keep the majority of men away from the Church would lose all rational foundation if once we grasped the conception of the Church as an army, a militant society pledged to get things done in the same way that the British Army exists to accomplish certain unmistakable ends, certain definite purposes.

These two propositions taken together seem to indicate that the vital problem before the Church is to discover how best to encourage that attitude of mind in which men think of themselves not merely as individuals moving to individual ends, but as bound to one another in a common membership, pledged to a common loyalty, moving to a corporate end.

It is clear that self-forgetfulness is essential to the highest development of character and to the accomplishment of any really great achievement, but I am inclined to think that it cannot be directly taught, that it must be, in a sense, incidental. The Church has always taught her children the importance of sacrificing money, pleasure, comfort, and so on. But such sacrifice undertaken for an individual heavenly end is of course a mere travesty of the sacrifice of self. It may be more enlightened than what is ordinarily called selfishness, but most emphatically it is not the reality. It is not even a lower degree of true self-sacrifice. It is different altogether in kind.

The sin to which religious people have always been most prone is the sin of idolatry. They have falsely identified symbol and reality. They have claimed for channels of truth that they are themselves the spring; for vehicles of grace that they are themselves what they convey. The Israelites put wood and stone in the place of the Lord of Hosts. Christians, too, at different stages in the development of our religion have claimed for a society or a book an authority which of right belongs to God alone.

The same tendency has appeared in the Christian attitude to sacrifice, the tendency to put the symbol in the place of the thing symbolised. The sacrifice of money or comfort may be a useful and educative symbol of the sacrifice of self, just as the offering of bulls and goats was a predictive type, a preparatory symbol of our Lord's one oblation of Himself. But it is when you begin to identify the symbol with the thing symbolised, the token with the reality, that idolatry begins. (Perhaps that is why many earnest people are so extraordinarily irritating in Lent.)

The sacrifice of things may be a most valuable discipline, preparing men to hear and freeing them to obey the call of a great cause and the summons to a real membership in a society pledged to advance it. Self-sacrifice, the real surrender of the self, cannot, from its very nature, be deliberately attained. It must, if it is to be a real losing of the self, be a result of something else, of a membership and a loyalty strong enough to override the too assertive claims of the individual self.

In this time of war mankind has shown a marvellous

power of self-forgetfulness, a magnificent capacity for loyalty. For that loyalty the ultimate claimant is and can be none other than God Himself. The supreme cause is the cause of His Kingdom. That God's work may be accomplished, that His Kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven, our membership is claimed and our loyalty is sought by His representative here on earth, the Church of the Universal, the Eternal Christ, the Incarnate God.

And so it is the Church's primary duty, not so much to teach sacrifice or other moral qualities, but to sound her call and to devote herself to her cause, in a way sufficiently imaginative and enterprising to enlist the sympathy of all men of good will, and then, incidentally, she will produce in them the power of sacrifice and those other qualities which she desires. By such a method she will produce these character results more thoroughly and without the taint of self-consciousness which has in the past so often marred them.

It is the experience of other societies that, though they may make men value their membership by what they are, the sense of membership can only be fanned to a passionate loyalty by what they do.

Again to take our illustration from the Army. The regiment—what it is, and what it has done in the past—of itself makes men proud to belong to it and jealous of its traditions. Their sense of membership will so far affect men's individuality that they will be anxious not to disgrace the corporate whole of which they are a part. But when the regiment is actually doing things, the sense of membership

will be stirred to a self-devouring flame, and the man who at other times was but mildly conscious of his dependence on and care for his regiment will utterly forget self in passionate love for the unit to which he belongs, and in whole-hearted determination to do his share in enabling it to accomplish its purpose.

Another illustration from an entirely different sphere may help to bring out the point that the sense of loyalty, though always present, will be active or quiescent according as to whether the body which claims our loyalty is doing things or merely existing.

At the Public School to which I had the honour to belong we played cricket in the summer, and in the winter played a form of football which was unique to our own school. At cricket, of course, we played against other schools, and in consequence all through the summer term we were school-conscious, and our sense of membership rose to boiling point on the day of the principal match of the season. At football there were no School matches of any real importance, and so the schoolboys' need of loyalty was concentrated on the House, and in the winter term we were just as House-conscious as in the summer we were School-conscious. Summer and winter alike, we felt ourselves members both of School and House, but in the winter, when the School was doing nothing to arouse and stir our sense of membership, the lesser loyalty was overwhelmingly the stronger.

What our Church is, with her venerable associations and her glorious past, makes us proud to belong to her, but our sense of membership will only be strong and life-

affecting if she does active and vigorous things in such a way as to call for our cooperation and to evoke our loyalty.

Of course membership has first to be made a recognised reality. Entrance to a school makes an immediate and admitted difference. The acceptance of the King's shilling changes radically a man's whole life. Baptism, on the other hand, is hardly recognised at all as admission to membership; and the restoration to men's minds of the truth that Baptism enrols us in a definite society is perhaps the first step towards any progress at all. But once we have in some degree attained the sense of membership, we need to have it fanned into activity by a Church which is really doing active things. The Church exists to offer corporate worship to God, and to do purposeful work for the world. The first cannot be accomplished while the worship of the congregation is delegated to a selected choir. The second will not be achieved till we kill for ever the conception that the Church exists for the benefit of the faithful few who attend her services.

The Church of God is the supreme claimant on earth to our loyalty, but the war has shown us the amazing power of the lesser loyalties, and if the spirit of self-sacrifice is to be fostered, these must be encouraged.

Mr. Wells in "War and the Future" has made the discovery that the only hope for the world is to be found in our common loyalty to the Kingdom of God.

"What common end can there be in all the world except this idea of the world kingdom of God? What is the good of orienting one's devotion to a firm, or

to class solidarity, or La République Française or Poland or Albania or such love and loyalty as people express for King George or King Albert or the Duc d'Orléans—it puzzles me why—or any such intermediate object of self-abandonment ? We need a standard so universal that the platelayer may say to the barrister or the duchess, or the Anzac soldier to the Sinn Feiner or the Chinaman, ' What are we two doing for it ? ' And to fill the place of that ' it ' no other idea is great enough or commanding enough but only the world kingdom of God.

" However long he may have to hunt, the blind man who is seeking service and an end to bickerings will come to that at last because of all the thousand other things he may clutch at, nothing else can satisfy his manifest need."

" . . . The world kingdom of God . . . nothing else can satisfy his manifest need." Every Christian will welcome such a confession of faith. At any rate, so far as this world is concerned, it expresses exactly the Catholic ideal, the world-wide Kingdom of God transcending all that makes for division and for bickerings among men. Mr. Wells has discovered a catholic ideal, but like all converts he shows in his new-found zeal an impractical exclusiveness. He does not see the " good of orienting one's devotion to . . . any intermediate object of self-abandonment." The suggestion that loyalty to a larger cause makes devotion to the intermediate causes useless and unnecessary, and the attempt to secure the larger loyalty by discouraging the sense of obligation towards lesser societies, is altogether to ignore the lessons of human experience.

The would-be cosmopolitan who will not narrow himself by love of country is rarely capable of any real self-devotion to the international ideal which he professes. The 'lover of humanity' is more often than not utterly miserable in a third-class railway carriage.

Earlier in this Essay I gave some illustrations of the various loyalties that are moving the minds of men out here. Their zeal for various concentric circles ranging from the cause of the Great Alliance to the particular platoon shows that the larger and smaller loyalties are not necessarily inconsistent. We must, I think, encourage everywhere the sense of membership, and everything that tends towards corporate life; family feeling, school *esprit de corps*, industrial solidarity, local patriotism and nationalism, as well as the idea of the world kingdom.

There is, of course, no necessary inconsistency between the lesser and the larger loyalties. A man may be zealous for the interests of his family, and yet a most loyal townsman; his local patriotism may be strong without in any way diminishing his love of country or his zeal for the Empire. Indeed, not only are these lesser loyalties not inconsistent, they are necessary stages in our education for the wider fellowship; a man is not likely to be a self-sacrificing patriot unless he has first learnt the lesson of the smaller circles, unless he has learnt to put the interest of his family or his town before his personal advantage.

It must be admitted that there is a very real danger that such lesser circles may tend to become exclusive, that the passionate loyalty of a man to some narrow society may become petrified and incapable of extending

outwards to the larger circles. There is, in this progressive education in the art of fellowship, the danger of arrested development. A boy's keenness on his school is a splendid thing, but there are some people who remain schoolboys all their life, and then an admirable childlike quality degenerates into a harmful childishness. Local patriotism was and is a magnificent thing. To civic pride we owe our finest architecture, our cathedrals and our guild halls. To it we owe much of our progress in education, town vying with town in the care and wealth lavished on its encouragement. In the Middle Ages local patriotism was vigorous and fruitful, but also it was at this point that there was then the greatest danger of arrested development. Local and provincial patriotism tended to become exclusive. The towns which had fought so eagerly for their charters, their privileges, and their liberties were, all too often, indifferent to the welfare of the country as a whole. That, of course, is a danger which has not yet entirely passed, local selfishness is not altogether unknown! But it is not now the real danger point. In the political sphere we are faced not so much by the perils of provincial narrowness as of an exclusive Nationalism. In the industrial sphere the danger is from syndicalist and class selfishness, and in the ecclesiastical from mere parochialism.

Parochialism and a narrow, exclusive nationalism may lead us to disaster; but the disaster if more conspicuous is less fundamental than the tragedy which is the result of sheer individualism. Germany has perverted the first of God's commandments into—Thou shalt have none other gods but Germany. "Deutsch-

land über alles." It is an idolatry, and so far as it has meant placing the interests of the State above the claims of God it has led to tragedy and wrong; to a war in which the moral claims of God and the interests of the world as a whole have been made subservient to the supposed necessities of the nation-state which claims of her citizens an exclusive loyalty. But, on the other hand, so far as the idolatry of country is better than the idolatry of self it has led to heroic qualities of endurance, self-sacrifice, and devotion.

The risks are great, but they are worth running. Nietzsche was nearer than many of us Christians to the spirit of our Master when he bade us "live dangerously." Christianity is always a launching out into the deep. If we encourage the sense of membership in all these minor societies, there is a chance of moving towards real Churchmanship—to real self-giving of the individual to the service of the Body. If in everything else we are strictly individualistic, if there are to be no minor memberships, then the individual habit of mind will have become so strong that our Churchmanship will be a caricature, we shall use our membership for individual ends, instead of giving our individual selves to the service of the whole, for the man who has never learnt to devote himself to the interests of some lesser society will never be capable of self-abandonment to the world Kingdom of God.

Membership is of the essence of Christianity. The Christian's life opens with enrolment at Baptism, "wherein I was made a member of Christ." The purpose of the Society is at the heart of the Christian's

prayer, "Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come." But it is to Leadership that we must look for the vitalising spark which will make our membership a real character-forming and life-affecting force. Earthly leadership is in commission to-day. The time of single outstanding personalities has gone past. The spread of education has on the one hand made men less willing to follow blindly, and on the other hand has given to larger numbers in some degree the faculties of leadership. However much we care for the corporate side of our religion, we have got to use our personalities, and on all of us to whom in any degree, in small circles or in great, the faculty of leadership has been given, there is laid the obligation of employing that gift for the advancement of the Kingdom of God here on earth.

Leadership is what the world needs, and every convinced Christian is bound to try to use the gift which has been given him to lead men towards the realisation of the world idea of the Kingdom, but over and beyond our puny powers we are conscious of the supreme leadership of the Captain of our Salvation. Christianity is membership, but it is also loyalty—loyalty to a Person. Membership always involves duties. But for the members of Christ, the life of duty is the life of faith. Faith is self-committal to a person. Seeking to live the life of duty does not, for us, mean the attempt to obey a code of dead rules ; it is the effort to conform our lives to the living will of a living Person, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A strong sense of membership is essential, not only for the sake of what it may enable us to achieve, but also for the good of our own individual life. It is only

in loyalty to a cause and in membership of a body pledged to advance it that we can hope for self-losing, and without self-losing there can be no self-finding. Self-surrender to a false ideal may well have disastrous results, and there are forms of corporateness which crush individuality beneath the deadening hand of power.

The lesser societies to which men belong owe a double duty; upwards and outwards to the larger Society of which they form a part; inwards and downwards to the individuals who compose them.

The German conception of the State fails in both directions; it does violence alike to humanity as a whole and to the individual. Regarding the State as supreme and ultimate, it wrongs the larger conception of the world kingdom; regarding the individual as a mere instrument to increase the power of the State, it destroys his individual freedom and crushes down his soul. And so it fails both upwards and downwards. The ideal of the Kingdom of God cannot fail upwards because it is not an intermediate loyalty, but has, of right, that supreme position which the German nation-state falsely arrogates to itself. It does not fail downwards because its welding force is not power, but love, and it is only in love that individuality can really grow and flourish.

Our membership is membership in Christ; our loyalty is loyalty to Christ; and Christ is Love. If our membership is a reality and if our loyalty is even unto death, we shall not only learn forgetfulness of self, the root of all virtue, but, because our self-losing will be inspired by love, we shall, in losing, find.

VII

WORSHIP AND SERVICES

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VII

WORSHIP AND SERVICES [1]

NEW churches, new services. Three years we have spent in sheds and barns and fields and orchards and schoolrooms and dug-outs and mine-craters, hastily adorned, or merely tidied, or *in puris naturalibus*;—a new church every Sunday, and most weekdays; new services in them; and new ideas and ideals as to the scope and wealth of public devotion.

Now these things have actually taken place, and are history. They have happened naturally without ecclesiastical feeling, or ecclesiastical notice; without a thought of disorderliness or yet any sense of order: liturgy vanished with peace, and rubrics paled in a redder world. An immense spontaneous, amicable anarchy has sprung into being,—and this has been the Church in France.

The home Church, bishops, liturgiologists, clergy and people, must recognise and allow for this, for it spells change when those who for three years have almost forgotten the ordered progress of the Prayer-book return to their altars. The thing was inevitable and

[1] I owe much in this paper to the contributions and criticisms of my brother-chaplains in the Division: and special light and leading to the Rev. B. T. D. Smith, of St. John's College, Cambridge.

it happened. There may be much to regret, there may be danger in it ; wisdom does not of necessity cry aloud on battlefields. But there is also good in it, simply because it was found necessary during the most intense years of living that English manhood has known. From so long and valiant and agonised an attempt to adapt public devotions to actual need may well come fruit for congregations who have the same needs and desires, but who cannot make them visible or audible in the same way as can a dying army. As for the chaplains, they have forgotten all of that slumberous ease which so easily attaches to the recitation of an Office, and learned that every prayer and sentence needs effort and care. We are a new race, we priests of France, humbled by much strain and much failure, revolutionaries not at all in spirit, but actually in fact ; and while often enough we sigh for the former days, the procession of splendid offices and the swell of the organ, these will never again content us unless or until the great multitude also find their approach to God through them.

Sometimes we almost shout for pain, fearing that our brethren at home will misunderstand us, because they have not known the things that we have known, nor understand the lack of equipment with which our Mother sent us forth. It may well be that we have grown one-sided or too many-sided in this faneless ministry ; and truly as yet none of our hardly-gathered experience has been defined or ordered. The following pages hope simply to set down the facts which must be reckoned with, because they have been facts for so long and are beyond question. Afterwards I wish, as

one who has no authority or claim but that of having observed, to suggest not details but directions of change in public services and their conduct. Fitness for place and use has become in these days the standard by which men and things are judged; and even the Prayer-book, august and beloved ever, stands for judgment. For while our tribes have wandered, dwelling in tents and holes of earth, it has been at best *semi-used and semi-usable*; and we have come to look upon it from the unfamiliar distance.

I.

Begin with Matins and Evensong. In France they have simply disappeared. When a building behind the line has been available for services, plus the crowning mercy of a portable harmonium, some inspiring attempts at Evensong have been made. But these have contained usually but one lesson and one selected psalm; while, by common consent, the second part of the prayers has been left to the priest's improvisations. The men certainly prefer this apparent and decent Evensong to less conventional services, and they have even been known to request their chaplain to intone the prayers, as being more "home-like." If psalms are selected and lessons shortened, and both made to bear, if possible, on the teaching of the day, dwelt upon again in the address, there seems no case for dethroning the queen of offices.

The morning parade service was meant unashamedly to be a "mangled Matins." There are as many versions of it, still further mangled, as there are chaplains. Yet everywhere it rings unmistakably as a Church

service ; and carries a distinct atmosphere of " C. of E." about it, whether it glow with the spiritual force of its conductor or fall dead. This atmosphere does not spring from the exceeding virtue or power of Matins, but from the fact that portions of the framework of Matins and Evensong are the only " popular " devotions universally possessed by the English people. This framework consists of the opening sentence, General Confession, Absolution (often replaced by the Compline form, or the collect for 21 Trinity), Lord's Prayers Versicles and Creed. Observe, this is not at all the liturgical framework of Matins, but a skeleton devotions which is built upon further, according to the wish of the chaplain, with a lesson, hymns, prayers, and address in any order, at any length, on any subject. Once drop the notion that such parade and voluntary services have anything to do with a liturgical office, and the result is not unsatisfactory. Indeed it has proved an invaluable blessing and help to chaplains and men alike, that both can take for granted the common knowledge of one skeleton popular devotion : nothing, in truth, puts the weird British temperament so wholly at ease as to start repeating the General Confession.

We have had to work with the tools at hand. In brief big parades, in little billet devotions, we have possessed one well-known scheme. It may not be perfect, but it has served—Confession, Lord's Prayer, Creed. And while most of us yearn for more and better schemes of popular devotion, we must pay the tribute of great gratitude for the splendid work that this has done. No longer can it be accounted a " mangled "

or "boiled down" Matins or Evensong; it exists in its own right, however meagre it be, as the one perfectly popular devotion for the mass of our people.

Here emerges, then, the first demand of the revolutionaries. They have no wish to interfere with the structure of the liturgical offices, nor with their use whenever profitable. But they do want more and fuller and wider schemes of popular devotion, that shall have a place in the Prayer-book, that can be known and loved by all from childhood; simple in language, intimate in feeling, and alight with the story and heart of our Lord; that can sink into peaceful, homely prayer, and spring into the beloved hymn effortlessly; and draw our eyes to Christ and our hearts to His Church in new and richer ways.

More drastic will be the changes clamoured for in the Burial Office. The present one has failed badly in the days of death. The writer has found a curious interest in making a collection of the services said or read by all the Church of England padres he has met by a graveside. Not one has been the same as another; and not one has been that in the Prayer-book. The structure indeed has been preserved, and here again it serves to continue the distinct atmosphere of the Church. The opening sentences remain, but some are new sentences [1]; either psalm or lesson remains, but

[1] New sentences. Usual are "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. . . ."; "Greater love hath no man than this . . ."; "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face . . ." The second is hardly suitable to peace conditions, but the third is an inspiration; due to the Rev. and Hon. Maurice Peel, killed at Bullecourt, May, 1917.

it is a new psalm or a new lesson,[1] or the old one shortened. Thence to the end of the Lord's Prayer, it remains as in the Prayer-book—often with the addition before the committal of a prayer to hallow the grave. The concluding prayers are one and all different. Only one chaplain have I found who did not pray directly for the dead,[2] and none who forgot

[1] Exact liturgiologists, who are few, use a psalm, generally 23 or 130. Of alternative lessons, the most frequently used are Rev. vii, 9–17, St. John xii, 24–26, and 1 Thess. iv, 13 to the end. Most often the Corinthians lesson is abbreviated to the first three and last six verses.

[2] The prayers employed seem to go by cycles, according to 'the use,' as it were, of different divisions, etc. One such group uses over the grave the Prayer of Commendation (in the Visitation of the Sick) curtailed; another the prayer in the Forms appointed for war, Part III., a Memorial of such as have fallen in the service of their country. (S.P.C.K.) A larger number employ the following prayers, or variants of them. "Almighty God, we commend to Thy lovingkindness the soul of Thy servant, who has given his life to defend us. Accept, O Lord, the offering of his self-sacrifice; and grant to him with all Thy faithful servants, a place of refreshment and peace, where the light of Thy countenance shines for ever, and where all tears are wiped away . . ." and "O Almighty Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, fulfil, we beseech Thee, the purpose of Thy love in those who are at rest, that the good work which Thou hast begun in them may be perfected unto the day of Jesus Christ . . ." Others I have heard are the beautiful prayer in the Roman Office, "Grant, O Lord, that while we lament the departure of this Thy servant . . ." (see "Prime and Hours," 'Commendatio Animae,' p. 292); and that most perfect one abbreviated from the Litany of St. James, "Remember, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the souls of them that have kept the faith, both those whom we remember, and those whom we remember not, and grant them rest in the land of the living, in the joy of Paradise, whence all pain and grief have fled away, where the light of Thy countenance ever shines; and guide in peace the end of our lives, O Lord, when Thou wilt and as Thou wilt, only without shame or sin." (I quote as I have heard the prayers actually used.)

the mourners at home. The result has been an office, no less beautiful but far more human, with not less but more true and ancient divinity in it ; and thereby deeper suitability, honesty, and comfort.

Here if anywhere the witness of France must be overwhelming. And we beg you and beg again, Church of the homeland, consecrate to perpetual English use the variations that by great instinct have committed the bodies of your sons, ten thousand times over, to their victorious bed of earth.

The change we demand is thus not in structure, but in matter. It is remarkable to behold, this reluctance of the English priest to vary structure, and the readiness with which he changes matter. He can be trusted not to impoverish. His changes all add something ; not in length, for he reduces the length of prayers as well as lections, preferring the briefer collect form to the seventeenth-century model ; but into them he puts more than the present office possesses,—the bigger untimorous faith of Catholic Christianity, and a juster measure of Christian consolation for those that mourn.

No chaplain takes liberties with the text of the Holy Communion Office, although the ignorance and slackness of Church of England men with regard to the Eucharist are his gravest trouble. As a rule, he tries to shorten the service. The King's prayer is left out. The Ten Commandments are seldom repeated, and yield to the two New Commandments, or the threefold Kyrie. Lately there has been a distinct tendency to drop the last two Comfortable Words. When time matters seriously, the service begins with the Church Militant

or the Invitation. The one important change I have observed on occasion is the placing of the Prayer of Oblation after that of Consecration,—and no one has murmured. The problems surrounding the Eucharist at the Front are educational. How shall this vast unsacramental multitude learn the service, learn to understand it, learn to love it ? And so come changes of a different nature. When two priests have been available, one to celebrate, the other to instruct in "the nave," the result has resembled a children's Eucharist at home. There is a useful and widespread habit of breaking up the prayer for the Church Militant into its component sections, prefacing each with a bidding, "Let us pray for . . ." The Agnus Dei many congregations delight to repeat together, to break worthily the silence after the Consecration. Great use has been made of hymns in the obvious places, and during Communion ; and this perhaps has been the greatest devotional help to the Eucharists of France, and will be demanded in home churches—only, may the demand be anticipated ! In that otherwise vast numbers of men would be excommunicated, and because men are rushed up to battle at any moment, afternoon and evening Communions have become universal ; and priests of the Catholic school, while taking every precaution to teach that this is an emergency of war, have led this development. Lately, the further development of communicating the majorities, who can only come to the altar in the evening, with the Reserved Sacrament has been tried locally with happy results, though it requires first a little explanation. These facts will compel much thought and

adjustment after the war, for the controversies of three generations are bound up in them. For the moment, let us only record them as facts, and add that they do not cause one breath of controversy at the Front.

One other word with regard to them ; for they have not become at all known in England, and may cause, on the one hand, bitter searchings of heart, and on the other may seem bald, natural, and unimportant. It needs a fierce effort of imagination to understand their importance. First, they affect the whole flower of British manhood. Then, the tense and awful moments of which they have been the centre have to be pictured and heard. You must listen to the roar and shaking of great guns ; must see the poor messy surroundings, where the white linen cloth and the two flickering candles alone speak of things pure and lovely ; must feel with the bowed and grimy men in mud-brown dress, torn and stained and even bloody ; must know that the minutes in front hold, the minutes just past have held, the issues of life, death, and dreadful maiming ; and that what we have described as " children's Eucharists " and " evening Communions " are the passionate care of a Mother weeping for her children, and the conveyance of the love and life of God to those who must have nothing less and nothing else. And so the ancient futilities of conflicting method vanish, and wise old disciplines are out of place, as the educated and ignorant, taught and untaught, the godly and the godless, come in to Christ, and go out to battle.

II.

So much for our record, which we know is true. In moving on to conclusions and suggestions, one thing and one only is in mind—that the British race pray and worship better. We do not suppose—we know—that no mere changing of services will work this greater change. That problem begins with the teaching of infants and does not end with the training of clergy. Not even a new, good, simple catechism, not even a ministry, perfectly trained and beyond reproach, will of themselves evangelise the British ; and much less any changing of details in a Prayer-book. Further, the experiments of France have often been mere adaptation to abnormal circumstance ; and these need to be thoughtfully sifted from those which hold deeper significance. Our revolution craves, not the spending of our present capital, but the adding to it ; it concentrates, not on verbal or other details, but on new provision to meet needs revealed in the day of need.

Thus, it has appeared that the Prayer-book as it stands is a volume that serves only those who are highly instructed in the Faith. A trowing of hard experience this. Hardly a soldier carries a Prayer-book, because there is little in it he can use. We never guessed of old how removed it was from common wants ; nor how intellectual are its prayers and forms of devotion. Its climate to the simple, ardent Christian is often ice. The warm romance of man's pilgrimage to God is absent from it, because it takes early stages for granted and can be used only by those who have

ascended many hills of difficulty. How we have blushed for the incomprehensibility even of the Collects !

Again, the Prayer-book in a peculiar way reflects the mind of the Church to the nation. It is the public programme of British institutional Christianity ; an official demonstration of the interests and passions that we bring to the throne of God. Men mark that these interests are curiously remote from those of an eager and well-meaning world, from its life, society and work. For example, the problems of labour press upon us, and vast Christian issues hang upon them. But the Prayer-book cares, on the face of it, for none of these things ; and the Church therefore stands condemned by the millions. If only a " Litany of Labour " lay within its covers, what a reproach would be done away with ! And more—it would preach Christian social obligation as a thousand sermons could not ; the mere fact of being " in the Prayer-book " would make it, so to speak, a " general routine order " ; the conscience of Churchpeople would be, insensibly and surely, taught and moved ; the witness of the Church to social righteousness, unanswerable before the toiling masses.

This is but one example of a general principle. The demonstrative and educative value of the Prayer-book has never been made use of, so that the whole scope of prayer has been narrowed except to the few who think and hunger most. We ask for wider employment of this book's tremendous power, to unite modern need to the Presence and purpose of God. And this, whether the need be ignorance of God or small ability in prayer, or social, or individual, or imperial and

missionary. May the Prayer-book be no longer our master, but our servant. It is the grander vocation.

And this leads on to a third demand: That the Church show some of the courage and decision of the trenches, and be bold to *experiment*. That it fear not to admit into its common manual new services and devotions which are confessedly experimental. They can be placed with "Forms of Prayer at Sea" and "Accession Services" after the Psalms; and revised, withdrawn, added to, every five or ten years. Why should there not be a variable portion of the whole volume just as there are variable portions of every liturgy within it? Where lurks danger here, or controversy? But the sympathy and wealth and hope and education of it would become more manifest; the treasure of the Book of Common Prayer would not be diminished because a man brings forth from it things new as well as old.

III.

The subject of public devotions has not aroused the interest of the Church as have those of ceremonial and sacraments. A few years before the war appeared Canon Bullock Webster's "Churchman's Prayer Manual"; and, as his preface stated, it was a first attempt to fill a gap. What a confession; and what disasters have followed our blindness in this direction! At a time when in the home churches the homefolk hungered for intercession, and when in French billets the short service of prayer was often the only type of service convenient or possible, the clergy had

no such thing that was known and loved at hand, and the people no idea of public prayer. In both spheres devotions depended for their grip and joy upon the priest's personality and ability; and by common consent we were found wanting, stiff, unversed. We conduct prayers even worse than we preach.

But the clergy must not bear all the blame. The people were at least equally unready, unpractised, awkward. The Church had never studied or learned the art of praying together. In France we have been found to be a most prayerless people; and it is at least possible that this is because we have gone the wrong way, or no way at all, about praying together. Many of our ecclesiastical troubles trace back to the same source. Why do our most devout clergy drift, often with an unwilling, compulsory drift, toward Reservation for Adoration, Benediction, the Rosary? Not because they are "Romanists," but because the Roman Church, however doubtful be the actual form of her popular devotions, has understood the spirit and principles of them aright, while we have hardly thought about the matter.

Two men only have seen far and tried hard. To Canon Bullock Webster the Church owes much. His book has widened the scope and improved the form and content of public devotions everywhere. Yet as a whole it only enriched, codified, made available, methods already in existence among keen parish priests: it did not attempt seriously to revolutionise them. Father Conran in haylofts and trenches made revolution. Whether his particular system takes root or not, it was based on new principles.

And this exactly is what we need here, new principles. New study of the subject, new experiment, *revolution*. One glance at the present field of congregational prayer, and the usual provision for it, shows our desperate poverty.

First, there are the forms set out by authority, usually consisting of prayers, short and long. However beautiful these may be in themselves—and too often they arouse the angriest criticism—as a public devotion they wholly fail. They may not indeed be meant for such use ; they are meant to fit into the formal public offices, especially Matins and Evensong. Perhaps they do so. But why is this the only need catered for by high authority ?

Next come Litany forms, which bear the burden and heat of the day. They at least recognise the human principle that it is good for the congregation to have spoken share in petition. They possess other virtues. Besides giving the congregation their common pleading, the Litany form is familiar. There happens to be a Litany in the Prayer-book, which is better known no doubt than it is popular. Familiarity of form is a mighty aid to public devotion, as it makes for ease and concentration. But if the form is bad or imperfect or non-popular, its virtue of familiarity does not help much. The Litany forms in common use are *not* bad, and non-popular only because imperfect. Such forms are almost always modelled on the Prayer-book Litany, which, with all its amazing beauty, is too cold and severe for popular use. It has, for such a purpose, the crowning defect of laying all the stress on pure petition, and of requiring a great effort of mind, rather

than a play of emotion : devotional intimacy and the atmosphere of the Presence and love of Christ hardly exist in it. It demands too much. A saint might pray it well if he had a week to do it in ; but the better test is a child, and children have a horror of this above all prayers. Compare, without any comparison of theological excellence, the Prayer-book Litany and the Roman Litany of the Sacred Heart : the reason for the unpopularity of the one is the reason for the popularity of the other.

Missionary intercessions, again, play a large part in English informal services. They are of any and every type, used most devoutly by the devout, but useless for larger employment as a second part, for instance, of a Sunday evening service. It is surely a mistake to possess only such specialised forms of missionary petition as can only be imposed on the missionary-hearted. Once more, the fault is that all emphasis and effort go into pure petition.

Fourthly, we have found the need, in France as in England, of preparation services for Holy Communion. But who can truthfully say that any form supplies the need well ? With all the wealth and poignancy of the circumstances attending the Institution, of the meaning of the Sacrament, and of our actual Liturgy, how does our present provision catch or introduce them ? It utterly fails.

Now the bare listing of these efforts reveals our lack. It reveals also complete chaos, but that is less important. Examine these main types emerging from the chaos, and at once, positively and negatively, the failure is understood.

Almost the whole emphasis in each case is laid on the petition offered, on the words of prayer used. So our thoughts are nailed to earth; and we must all the while think; not feel, not see.

No single devotion that we possess is devoted simply to God and His Christ. It seems incredible; but look at fact. No wonder there springs up an impulse for pure devotion before the Reserved Sacrament.

Yet follows a fact still more incredible, especially in a communion that sets the knowledge of the Scriptures so high. Into none of our devotions do we interweave our knowledge, and the life, of Christ. Our prayers arise from our carefully selected and literary thoughts, not out of the picture of God Whom we have seen, not out of His longings and His tremendous history. We start, it is true, with "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity"; but how cold, unkindling, and alas! perfunctory, that, compared to the devotional wealth contained in one chapter of any Gospel. The Infancy, the Life of temptation and love, the Passion, the Way of the Cross peer out of every line of Roman public devotions. Are they wrong, or we?

Further, we leave each member of our little congregation to a *loneliness* of prayer. His own effort is his own chief concern. The sense of the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, of our own brotherhood in the faith, of the Communion of Saints around us, praying with us, one mighty host of the redeemed at their great work—these things are not.

And even in the petitionary clause, so prominent, we fail. It rarely touches common homely need. During

the war, priests have had their flock at their doors. In the farmyard outside our billets passes before our vision every detail of the life of men, from the morning wash to the spoken curse. We go out and come in with them. We censor even their thoughts as they find expression in home-letters. Neither the present Prayer-book, nor any prayers we have ever heard, enter into the problems and difficulties of actual existence. In the writer's division, the chaplains made and make an immense effort to bring these things into public prayers; and it has proved the hardest of tasks. We have had no training for it: church language, church tradition, and our own powers of sympathy, unexercised along such lines, braked and blocked our progress.

But all these are great first things, in prayer as in the life of faith; and we leave them out. They are the big simple things too, the things of love that give warmth and loveliness to difficult belief. They are therefore the things that draw the people to God, and make real the world and work of the Spirit. We need not labour so piteously over strings of petitions, for it is more fruitful to see the face of Christ. What could not public devotions do, if they but honestly gave first place to first things! And the lack is deeply felt, consciously by priests, ever trying to *force* the genuineness of prayer upon their people; and no less strongly by the people, who find it harder to define their hunger, and drift away from a prayer at once too lofty and too low—wandering too often into indifference, into sectarian byways, or to Rome.

New systems of prayer are hard to introduce; that is why we crave the Prayer-book to help itself and

help us. That would at once universalise in our Communion the wider scope and ideals, and the actual experiments, so that they would have fair trial in every diocese, and at all ages of man, from childhood onward. A hundred years will pass, and maybe a thousand experiments be made, ere England learns to pray better and to love prayer. Only let the first of these experiments be made at once, with all the authority that our Mother can give, so that the years be shortened.

It will not, therefore, be out of place if the following principles of public devotion be set forth as a real result of French experience.

(i) Any intercession or devotion to be of general use and popularity must reduce the personal element of the conductor to a minimum. The emphasis here is on the word "general." What was wanted for the rough churchless work in France, what will be wanted for any similar work that is done in England after the war, is a devotion the framework of which is known generally—as well known as the General Confession, Lord's Prayer, Versicles, Creed. Strong and saintly priests can always radiate their spiritual power, whether through such a known scheme, or through their own improvisation. But theirs is not the need; we, the majority of clergy who are weak, timid, ordinary, dealing with weak, timid, ordinary people, need a scheme not wholly dependent on our spiritual power; one familiar to the congregation, so that confidence be established on both sides, and the power of old association be wedded to the due proportion of faith, lovingly secured and glowingly set in order.

(ii) In dealing with Englishmen, the converse is

yet more true—the share of the congregation must be raised to a maximum. Even in the old offices, advance can be made to this end. The former custom of clergy and people reciting together the General Thanksgiving has been universally restored in France, and added to by the common recitation of many another well-known prayer. Order does not suffer ; reality, sincerity and atmosphere gain enormously. The versicles in France have moved from triumph to triumph ; and we have known the congregation time after time burst into their Stainer settings with less than no encouragement from the chaplain ! Men love to have their part, and with our unique reverence and orderliness during service it can be safely given to them, to the help of everybody and to a distinct growth of warmth and impressiveness.

(iii) The devotion or framework must be learned from childhood. Therefore in most respects it must be simple, that children can understand ; and profound, that children and parents and the aged pray it happily together. A sound test of any devotion is the power it has over the mind of a child. Here again the Russians and Romans find no difficulty ; but we scarcely try to mould the minds of our children to devotions that will help them all their lives. The spiritual grasp of a child is not small, although it be the grasp of atmosphere and emotion rather than of intellect. Even in England the little boy can kneel side by side with the saint, and pray the Lord's Prayer no less well ; but we have provided few other devotions for them in common, and make little use of good models such as the Agnus Dei and Salvator Mundi. Again we hug the heresy,

that prayer is first and last a work of the mind, rather than of the humble soul or the adventurous heart.

(iv) We need, then, a framework or skeleton (perhaps more than one) of some rigidity, with infinite power of variation and adaptation to the particular season, or mood, or intention.

(v) And now we arrive at the crucial point of "atmosphere" or "stress." The right word to define this, our pitiful need, is not easy to find. It is a question of devotional intimacy; of subduing the emphasis on petition to the knowledge of the Presence; of adding love and joy and tears and the desire to kneel to our approach.

Would that the home clergy could see us *struggling* to achieve for ourselves and the groups of willing but unpractised men the sense of God's Presence in our midst. Every detail of environment fights against us. Past stoic endurance of unintelligible collects has led the men's minds to expect no reality or meaning in the "prayer" part of the service. Dirt and damp make it impossible to kneel. Even belief in prayer has perished. And the padre stands in the midst resolved that the Presence shall be known, and the prayers mean and help much. The whole brunt falls on him; he has to explain prayer, say prayer, and himself feel prayer, in a few successive sentences, not in church language, but everyday language. Every devotion becomes a hard battle; the building of a spiritual house from the bottom-most foundation, with all the bricks to be made, and mere wisps of straw wherewith to make them.

These things ought not to be ; but they are. They will not mend at once, but they will never mend unless we teach by our public devotions a more intimate, human, understandable, pictorial, worshipful manner of prayer. Cannot this ideal be more nearly reached by attention to atmosphere and substance in these ways ? —By making the substance of the devotion wholly or mainly evangelical. Remembering that " he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father," our prayer might aim at re-enacting the life of Christ, at entering into His longings, at picturing His love and work, His Incarnation, Passion, Triumph. Thus the old familiar story breathes its meaning through our petitions, and relates itself to our needs, big and little ; the sight of God is constant through the speaking of our hopes and confessions ; nay, God, Christ, *constitutes* our very devotion, so that it all becomes an act of adoration and recollection and submission of self. Thus, while the whole act proceeds from the heart and soul as well as from the mind of each of us, it also proceeds throughout from the known desires and heart of Jesus our Lord. Mark how the most " popular " devotion we possess—" the Story of the Cross "—exactly does this very thing ; and the people rightly love to pray it for all its bad poetry. Father Pollock's metrical litanies in Hymns Ancient and Modern abound in virtue. Otherwise we possess few such evangelical acts of prayer. Two fulfil the above conditions—the magnificent " Litany of the Holy Spirit " used only by the clergy, where the work of the Holy Spirit from Creation onwards is portrayed from clause to clause ; and Dr. Dearmer's " Litany of Labour," which

with revision and abbreviation (of the second petitionary half only) I long to see in the Prayer-book.

By attention to special forms and methods of devotion which have proved themselves to the English mind. *Singing has* a worth impossible to exaggerate. It is no mere matter of "liking a tune": careful watching has convinced me that a hymn mediates to an Englishman a better country; is his chosen sacrament of approach to God. Mark again that the Story of the Cross is a hymn sung. The Three Hours service owes much of its appeal to the hymns that are an integral part of it in our churches; and the people love to repeat "From step to step and woe to woe, To Calvary with Christ we go." Metre in any case appeals to the reserved Briton, for by its means he can lift up his voice, together and in time with his shy neighbours. The English hymn has impressed and delighted the native Catholics of France; has acted better than any church-bell in bringing men to church; has given the one general glimpse out of a bad world of wars into a blessed one of purity and peace; has followed the fallen to his grave; and has been raised in triumph by the mortally wounded on the field. The time is ripe for a regularised, a sympathetic, and a scientific use of hymns in every public devotion. And how they reinforce that evangelical passionate element in prayer that we need!

By the appeal to the eye, which was made to help us, and which we have wickedly neglected. The two *Graphic* pictures "The Great Sacrifice" and "The White Comrade" really helped the personal religion of many men. Englishmen now love the crucifix, and the wayside

Calvaries have persuaded more prayers than all the chaplains put together.

By careful use of particular moments. The most important of these is the beginning, when the congregation must be led into the Presence of God. The conductor's greatest responsibility will always come here. A good start colours the whole act ; a bad one spoils it. The whole method of beginnings needs wise thinking out.[1]

By the inclusion, not only of devotions which invite a response, but of good spiritual exercises to be said by all together. All missioners in England know the value of united " acts " of Faith, Love, Self-oblation, Penitence, and Praise ; and they have made the whole difference to the reality of prayer in France again and again. I have found especially helpful and popular, amongst others, the lovely prayer of St. Richard of Chichester and the Compline Antiphon to the Nunc Dimittis. If such a practice were made customary

[1] The beginning is above all the place for the use of *silence*. Silence is most important and so often misused. Surely, in any mixed assembly of men and women at all stages of spiritual growth, it should be employed only for grasping and recalling the Presence of God and our sense or picture of Him. It should not be used for individual intercession at such a time, not at all. Independent acts of prayer by the people are too hard for them in the midst of a congregational act ; and this perhaps has been historically proved by the gradual dropping and disappearance of the liturgical pause between the Bidding and its Collect. We all know how disturbing and unsatisfactory the attempt to form our own prayers can be, when the conductor says " Let us pray for a few minutes in silence for " this or that. Either the silence ends ere we have begun, or we end while yet the silence continues. This difficulty vanishes if the silence be used (at the start and at intervals afterwards) only for re-intensifying the sense of God's Presence or Christ's love, or the Holy Spirit's fellow-utterance.

by the Prayer-book the gain surely would be tremendous.

The intimacy which makes men love prayer springs, after all, from these few things—the sense of the Presence of God, the emphasis on the loved facts of His Life and Love as Man, and the completeness of the share of each and all in the common act of prayer.

What, finally, are the actual schemes for which the rebels beg the authority of the Prayer-book? There are eight at least, and the whole of them would hardly add a dozen pages to it—about the space devoted to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

1. A skeleton devotion to introduce and end any special intercession for Church, State, necessity, etc., that can be used at any time, in church or out of it.

2. A skeleton service of Preparation for Holy Communion; and a short, simple Thanksgiving.

3. An act of Thanksgiving and Praise.

4. A devotion of the Passion. This, at least. Better still, others of the Incarnation and the Incarnate Life, too.

5. A Litany of Devotion of the Saints—to help cleanse the rust from our belief in the Communion of Saints, which eats quietly into the whole English armoury of working religion.

6. A missionary devotion.

7. A Litany of Labour.

8. An evening commendation, preferably the simplest form of Compline that exists, for Compline is much used already, and has stood all time's tests.

Easy room would be found in these for a few magnificent collects which have well earned their place

in the Prayer-book (such as " O God, Who hast made of one blood all nations for to dwell on the face of the earth . . ." and " O Lord, Who in a wonderful sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion . . .") and which the clergy would be glad to have at hand, and not hidden in this or that manual of devotion.

But if anything be done, may all be done *boldly*, without stint of space and without fear of novelty. May all be done *simply*, in language understood of a child. And, not least in moment, may all be done *swiftly*, to be ready at once for the new race that returns, and for the children who have passed through the burning fiery furnace ; who turn again to their Church, and wish to begin anew at the beginnings.

IV.

Our poverty in other directions has led men to search out the hidden treasure ; and a manhood in need has begun to gaze upon the Holy Communion. Attendance at it is meagre enough still ; the understanding of it feeble even amongst the attendants ; any sense of obligation toward it non-existent. The great festivals spell sorrow and torture to the keen priest. But the improvement since the early days of the war is clear. Everybody now knows that there is such a service ; numbers qualify themselves to partake by Confirmation. In the base hospitals a chaplain can spend all his time preparing men for what they know they have missed at the Front ; but even at the Front, whole companies, who have no intention to communicate, will present themselves voluntarily at

the Eucharist—often to the amazement and bewilderment of their padre. The growth of communicants is real if slow, though most are occasional, not regular. It is the more notable, because the sad surprise of the war has been the fact that the "Catholic" laymen and servers, who might have worked missionary miracles, as a class have failed the chaplains. They have had every chance: search for them and pressure upon them are faithfully performed, but they have found the surroundings too rough. Of course there are glorious exceptions.

Everything fights against the service. Early morning Communion is made hard to impossible by the demands of military life: it needs great personal sacrifice and initiative, and so challenging a confession of a man's faith, that few are ready to make it often. It is unfortunate that in any case the absence of the godly at his Communion means that the godless must do his military fatigue. General opinion counts it a service for saints only, or designed for "windy," desperate moments. On the chaplains' side, the necessary preparations, the carriage of vessels and furniture many miles, add to their difficulties. In the place of hushed churches, we have only the most deplorable makeshifts of buildings, dirty, noisy, hideous; and outdoor Communion in summer, if romantic, is undevotional. Whether there be no communicants or a hundred is wildly uncertain.

Yet, as faith would expect, the Eucharist has proved itself to thousands to whom it was scarcely a name before. And if hymns be added to increase the congregation's part, to vary the kneeling posture, and—dare

we say ?—to add something modern and familiar to the dignity of ancient language and to the solemnity of mystery, it fulfils perfectly every principle of popular devotion quite apart from the Gift and the Presence there. At officers' conferences, where the officers are plain men, who do not themselves communicate often, and prefer the Matins tradition of Sunday observance, there is astonishing consent that the Eucharist henceforth must be the chief service of the day, and put in the chief place of time and honour. Be it repeated, it is the sturdy, uncontroversial, unceremonial, central body of Churchmen who speak thus.

In the administration of the Lord's Supper, it goes without saying that every good principle of public worship finds its highest expression. The problem before the Church therefore is different here, and twofold—to make the liturgy fully intelligible, and its celebration wholly accessible.

Of these, the first is the more important. By making the liturgy " intelligible " is not meant a mere simplifying away of all its mystery, which happily were impossible, nor yet a modernising of its ancient dignity ; but a deeper and more thorough teaching of its meaning, its course and its evangelical action. I am anxious to avoid discussing, indeed, any changes which have not been called for by war experience, *e.g.* the arrangement of the Canon, however important these things be in themselves. The matter in hand is not personal preference, not even liturgical propriety, but the facts and lessons of France.

On these grounds there are a few simplifications, almost beyond controversy, minor but useful, that

could be made. That, in accordance with the Scottish Office, and general use in Flanders, the New Commandments and threefold Kyrie be placed as alternatives to the Ten Commandments: and the King's Prayer be left out after them. That the long exhortations and proper prefaces be printed in an appendix to the Office, so as to render the following of the liturgy simpler to the uneducated and the young. And that the customary additions before and after the Gospel, and also the Benedictus, and Agnus Dei, be added in their place as at least permissible. As things are, we have to carry about some hundreds of extra little books in which the actual service is straightforwardly set out, or else, throughout its course continually announce the number of the page we have reached.

Harder is the question of re-wording. Words carry not only meaning but atmosphere with them. There is an archaism, a remoteness, that is dignified; there is also one that is unsympathetic. In France one has been conscious here and there of an unsympathetic tinge to Prayer-book expression. Here it is too purely ecclesiastical, there too "aristocratic."[1] The comment of a Nonconformist has justice in it: "Your Prayer-book smacks of the court, not of the home." The last half of the Church Militant, except for its

[1] These qualities are seen at their worst in the Baptismal Offices. Imagine 'Baptism of such as are of riper years' being read to a group of typical Tommies on the eve of action, as has happened more than once. An office four times as short and ten times as comprehensible might raise the lost dignity of Holy Baptism by enabling it generally to be administered in the course of a public office, when the church is full.

timidity toward the departed, is perfect as a prayer; but the section dealing with King and Nation has by then destroyed its reality and living touch, just at a point, too, where the fighting folk were most anxious to pray. It is more than a matter of changing the bad archaisms "indifferent," "curates," "lively": redrafting is necessary.

The element of "homeliness" may, however, be introduced more easily by way of enrichment. It would be most helpful to the use of Holy Communion as our most intimate devotion, if Collects, Epistles, and Gospels were provided for Church, national, and family occasions—for a birthday, a marriage, a burial; for commemoration of the departed, of the Lord's Supper; for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, harvest thanksgiving, special necessity, war, travellers, emigrants, colonists, foreign missions; for St. George, St. Patrick, St. David. Indeed, richer provision for saints' days links up with the crying urgency of recognising the heroes of faith, as the nation is set upon celebrating its heroes of battle. It is appalling to think that (except for a name in a calendar) we do not even remember officially St. Augustine and others who brought us Christ. A new appreciation of history, and, more, of its spiritual meaning, has spread through these hosts. Pray heaven the official book of prayer and faith neglect and lose it not.

Yet so far we have scarcely touched the fringe of our new task. The incredible ignorance of officers and men alike with regard to the Lord's own service, its foreignness hitherto in their religious experience—this it is the Church must rouse herself with furious energy

to dispel. For three years we priests of France have watched it aghast. And it is so tragic because men do approach the Holy Communion wistfully as a thing divine and wonderful ; with honest hope that the love and strength of God will somehow there be mediated to them. And first they are baffled by their ignorance of the service itself. The shyness that this causes during its progress is painful to priest and congregation alike, and often robs both of any feeling but awkward discomfort. The people have to be told to stand for the Gospel ; at other points of the service they know not what to do ; timidity prevents them making their responses at Sursum Corda and elsewhere, or else they make them with an ashamed mutter ; the Amen after Consecration goes by default always. They have to be minutely directed how and when to come up for Communion. Vast numbers have no idea how to receive ; in early days we had usually to give notice[1] that each communicant must not drain the whole chalice. Often confusion reigns after the Blessing unless a hymn be sung, or a little office of thanksgiving said.

Now if the ignorance of these surface details be so great, how an hundredfold greater is the ignorance of Communion and Eucharist behind. The course of the service, to all but a fraction of our communicants, is an arbitrary enigma, a jumble of lections and prayers leading up to a moment when they know they must keep very quiet, and then come forward and take—Something ; and then go back to further prayers. Can

[1] The wisdom of doing this was impressed on a group of us 'Temporaries' on our arrival in France by an experienced Regular C.F.

we blame them ? Have any of us learned to understand the bearing of each lection and prayer except by our own efforts, or from long experience of a devotional manual ? Really, if this ignorance is incredible as it is painful, the supineness of us clergy in having allowed it is no less so. We have taken it for granted that familiarity with the Communion service will bring with it full understanding ; but we have not noticed that this familiarity has never been obtained ; and that even if it had, understanding does not necessarily follow. Where there is neither familiarity nor understanding, there is naturally no love ; and the Sacrament repels rather than benefits. In this evil case stands England.

Go deeper still. The very inward attitude and disposition to be adopted during the service and toward the Sacrament are unknown and therefore unpractised. No preparation is made, and therefore expectation is weak and muddled. Men do not worship there, because they have no idea what worship is. They do not bring their dearest needs and longings there, because a service is a thing which has to be followed, not used ; and far be it from them to add any private prayer of their own to it ; no notion of coming with " special intention," or of independent spiritual venture, has occurred to them. The moments of silence are moments of uncomfortable waiting, or even of looking about. What they actually receive, they do not know ; and therefore make no exercise of faith in regard to It. The mystical entry by imagination or love into the passion of their Christ set forth is far beyond their conception. Even the simple knowledge that Com-

munion is an act of brotherhood is not grasped, much less any less earthly doctrine. Yet the Power of the Presence does work among the dim, dim understandings of men; and the hungry come in greater and greater numbers to be filled.

There is laid upon us, then, a gigantic effort of instruction. Our old Confirmation standards of teaching the Eucharist look utterly puny, and sinful, in the light of war lessons. And the call waxes more urgent still, when we see how minute a proportion of Church of England men have even this understanding that is so dim. Instruction by ear only has proved a desperate failure. There seems to be but one way of coping with the situation, that, whether we like it or not, our people henceforth be taught by eye as well the central devotion of Christendom, from earliest childhood. We must do it, and all do it, "for their sake," and damn bygone ecclesiastical prepossession. So that the child grows up, not only at home in the service, not only conscious of its primacy and obligation, not only aware of its splendid content, meaning, gift and action, but also able to wield all these things himself familiarly for his own need and Godward thirst, and to a worthier, happier reception of the Body and Blood of Christ.

We want avowedly to encourage non-communicating attendance, not, maybe, for itself, but for its end. Communions then will increase in number, for no Englishman will be content with less than a whole share of sacred possessions; and they will be better communions, better understood, less timid. There is no training or teaching of the Eucharist that

is full or abiding except that which can be given during and by the Eucharist itself. If attendance be encouraged, the chance of instruction is many fold increased; and with instruction and familiarity alone come to the Englishman the love of Communion, and the power to worship. To many these statements are platitudes; would they could see how France has resaid, reshouted, them: to others they seem dangerous —will they not think it out again in the name of the multitudes of their fallen to whom the gate of loveliest grace was for ever shut upon earth?

And in our new teaching, we want to begin with the simplest, clearest things. It were a very thin conception of Holy Communion to understand it as a striking act of *brotherhood*, but that much is easily taught and easily grasped; and once grasped it means more perhaps than we divines realise to a world of weak and toiling men, who are sick for that very thing. Proclaim the act of brotherhood, and the next issue will soon become manifest, that it is also the acceptable hour of the Lord.

Only if the task of instruction be taken everywhere in hand will the problem of "accessibility" be solved without bitterness. It is easy to say "Where there's a will there's a way," but probably to many at home, especially in the industrial centres, the impossibility of receiving or attending Holy Communion in the morning is as great as among the fighting troops. Only we have not seen it. We have provided for those who keep normal hours or can freely leave home; but not for those who work all night, or start labour at dawn, or are tied till evening by household duties.

At least let us discover the facts and face them. For anything is better than that, among the populations to whom we minister, any section or any single soul be perforce excommunicate. And the virtual excommunication of a parent generally involves that of his children. . . .

At once the allied questions of evening Communions and of Communion with the Reserved Sacrament open up. They are serious on two sides to priests who deem one or other of the practices, except perhaps in gravest emergency, disloyal to the Church and dangerous in consequences. The war has proved decisively that the mass of laymen find nothing unseemly in either. In France the grave emergency has been ever present. The distinction there between day and night, as that between Sunday and weekday, tends to vanish; the morning is always a time of strenuous labour, and the evening is sometimes a time of rest. In any case, it has been unthinkable to the shepherds to allow the flock, ordered out at any sudden moment to death, to go unhouseled. Frankly and gladly, "for their sake" accepting the situation, many of us have come new to afternoon, evening, and night Communion. Such occasions naturally draw throngs of men sobered and earnest. We have guarded the practice so far as words can, by declaring it a war emergency, not to be looked for at home, and by instructing carefully through the course of the service. The writer knows one great priest who then and then only indulged in majestic ceremonial to drive home the feeling that this was an exceptional proceeding! But it is without doubt due to these evening Communions, or to the instruction

given at them, that the Blessed Sacrament has grown larger in the love of warriors.

Equally necessary, but more rare, if they are to be provided with the Food of spiritual strength at the hour of crisis, has been the carrying of the Reserved Sacrament to positions where not only the Communion service, but even reception in more than one kind, has been out of the question. Explanation is hardly needed then, but tell them that they are receiving Communion as the wounded in their hospital bed receive it (only in hospital it is almost always possible to communicate in both kinds) and they understand perfectly.

The religious atmosphere on such occasions is unique and wonderful, but it is not the atmosphere of the morning Communion ; it seems verily a different service, reminiscent of the Roman Exposition and Benediction. It is the coming of the weary and heavy-laden for rest and solace, rather than the awaking of the heart right early to the joy and strength of new pilgrimage, of accepted and confronted duty. The element of sacrifice and self-offering is absent from it ; all stress is upon the blessing and peace given. Some chaplains, indeed, fear its effect upon the *moral* of men about to fight and endure. But this is clear—evening Communion in either manner cannot be a substitute for the stronger, better Communion of morn.

And there is the further dilemma, that evening Communion ministers disastrously to the Englishman's laziness in things religious. Amongst one hundred soldier communicants, while it is genuinely impossible for some forty to present themselves in the morning, the other sixty half-deliberately choose the easier way.

In the long run, as a regular practice, this will weaken and degrade the very Service in which we trust to exalt them. If there is a " peace emergency " which can only be met in similar ways, it would seem wise to create a sharp distinction between the morning and the evening act. Now Communion with the Reserved Sacrament achieves this exactly by its seeming disadvantage, that it is an act of Communion, not one of corporate worship. Thereby the distinction is at once set up, that the morning Eucharist is the great corporate offering of the brotherhood's love and worship; and the evening Communion, something less than that, and different, although giving in the same measure, which is beyond measure, the gift of Christ.

On these ancient matters of controversy, the chaplain rebels wish to ask nothing but this: that search be made with new-opened eyes to find whether or no there are not sections, even classes, of people for whom the morning provision is useless or unreasonably hard; and that, if so, other provision be publicly made; and we priests be less bewildered by conflict between church order and the people's need, and hurried into practices often overrash, always too individual. We return to the same plea, that even here in the Holy of Holies the home Church fear not to experiment, so only the flock, the whole flock, be fed. And no less earnestly do we pray her forgiveness where in the pitifulness of our impotence as priests we have turned in France to blame her or improve her ways as those that know the Spirit better than do her Spirit-led generations.

VIII

WORSHIP AND SERVICES

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VIII

WORSHIP AND SERVICES

JUDGED by one standard the subject of the present Essay is a comparatively unimportant one; by another it is amongst the most vital of all which affect our religious life. When we consider the tremendous facts of the existence and purposes of God, of His revelation in Jesus Christ, and of the meaning and destiny of human life, the question of the particular mode in which we should address ourselves to the Almighty becomes almost insignificant, and the interminable wranglings over this or that form of public worship seem only to argue an amazing blindness to the nature of the Divine Being. But when we look at the matter from a more human standpoint we realise its importance, for, so long as the Church exists, the generality of men will instinctively base their ideas of religion upon her public presentation of it, and form their conception of the character of God from the manner in which she teaches them to approach Him. Just as the Pagan imagined the Godhead to be like unto the gold or silver or stone, graven by art or man's device, which filled his temples, so will the normal

Englishman judge of the Almighty by the worship of a Christian Church. While, therefore, the consideration of our Church services cannot claim to rank in essential importance with other subjects dealt with in this volume, as a matter of practical moment it is by no means the least vital.

In every department of human life experts are apt to speak and write too exclusively from the expert's point of view ; they live in an atmosphere and express their ideas in a phraseology with which the lay mind has little in common, with the result that the expert seldom succeeds in making himself intelligible to the layman, nor can he on the other hand enter into the experience or appreciate the requirements of his less learned brother. This is peculiarly true in the religious sphere. Of the hundreds of books upon questions of religious interest which issue from the press year by year, it is rare to find one which treats the subject in a manner likely to appeal to those who have not made theology a special study, or who are unfamiliar with religious phraseology. It is, of course, difficult, if not impossible, to deal with doctrinal questions in untechnical language, but the tendency has permeated the whole field of religion. It is conspicuous in preaching, in controversy, and above all, perhaps, in the religious Press, with the inevitable result that the man in the street has come to regard Religion as a thing apart. Church services are a case in point. During recent years there has been a considerable amount of discussion upon the need of reforms in one direction or another in our services ; the question has cropped up from time to time in the correspondence

columns of the Church papers, it has appeared upon the agenda papers of innumerable ruridecanal and diocesan conferences, it is occupying the serious and prolonged attention of Convocation itself. But the discussion has for the most part been carried on in the "expert" atmosphere and from the expert's point of view; it has been debated *ad nauseam* by eminent liturgiologists, or by the clergy and the small body of devout and regular worshippers, whose very familiarity with our services as they are makes them genuinely incapable of considering the matter through the eyes of the average, unecclesiastically-minded layman. Those who have ventured to approach the subject from a more detached and open-air standpoint have generally been reproached with unfaithfulness to the Church's tradition and disloyalty to our "incomparable liturgy." In a word the tendency of those who have taken part in these discussions has been to look inwards rather than outwards, to consider the interests of the minority rather than those of the majority, to safeguard the past rather than to modify it along the lines of modern needs. In the criticisms and suggestions which follow it is my aim to look at the subject through the eyes of average men and women who, while they may attend church with more or less regularity, are in no sense religious experts: these form the bulk of our congregations, and it is with a view to their spiritual needs, rather than to a mere reverence for antiquity, that our services should be framed. Nor must we forget that even these are but a tiny percentage of the whole population, and that amongst the great majority who seldom or never "go

to church " there is probably a considerable proportion who would find their way there if they discovered that churchgoing supplied a need in their lives. We are far too ready to ignore the uncomfortable fact that of late years churchgoing amongst all classes of the community has steadily declined almost in proportion as services have been multiplied and elaborated.

A well-known Bishop, preaching on a special occasion in St. Paul's Cathedral, took for his text the words " What mean ye by this service ? " and the question affords an appropriate basis for our present inquiry. Why do we go to church ? What is in the mind of the man in the pew as he settles down in his place on Sunday ? The obvious answer is a simple one and may be found in the opening exhortation of Morning and Evening Prayer. We are here to worship God, to sing His praise, to hear His Word, to ask His favour. But a little inquiry amongst the occupants of the pews will prove that in nine cases out of ten such an answer would be untrue. Nothing is to be gained by ignoring facts—popular as the practice is amongst Churchmen —and however unpalatable the truth may be, it is full time that we realised that even amongst conventionally religious folk the instinct for worship and indeed for prayer itself has largely disappeared. Modern religion is tending to substitute an ethical for a supernatural basis; its ambition is to develop character rather than to glorify God, it is more concerned with the evolution of man than with the Person of the Almighty. It is of course true that the war, with its appalling toll of human life, has temporarily arrested this tendency, and turned men's thoughts

to the world behind the veil; but even so the desire has generally been for some means of communication with the departed rather than for communion with God, and in any case it is very doubtful whether such reachings out to the unseen will long survive the close of war. As a result of this emphasis upon the human side of religion the ordinary churchgoer, so far as his purpose is a conscious one at all, is more concerned with what he can get out of the service than what he has to give through it. Men will tell you that they go to church because it does them good, it gives them a lift up and helps them better to face the temptations of the week. The most popular parts of the service are the music and the sermon; hymns and, to a less degree, psalms and canticles have the same emotional effect as may be seen in the singing of a battalion on a long and tiring march: the words matter little, but if the tune is an appealing or inspiring one it lifts men out of themselves and makes them feel good. The sermon too is valued far more highly than is generally supposed. We are so accustomed to hearing sermons criticised that we are apt to assume that they might almost be dispensed with; but this is far from being the case. The very fact of criticism presupposes a certain measure of interest, and any preacher who can speak clearly and intelligibly to his congregation is sure of genuine and grateful attention. A service without a sermon is commonly held to be a very unsatisfactory business. But the prayers are frankly unpopular; they are regarded as a necessary formality which must be endured in the same spirit in which in nursery days we plodded through the bread and butter

stage before jam and cake could be reached. It is probably no exaggeration to say that seventy-five out of every hundred churchgoers spend the time devoted to prayers in somnolence and wandering thoughts.

I may remark in passing that I am deliberately leaving out of account those whose churchgoing is of a purely conventional or of a compulsory kind. The former class is a steadily diminishing one. Less than a generation ago it was the proper thing to attend church at least once on Sunday; to-day the fashion survives in some neighbourhoods, but it is rapidly declining, and very soon it will be rare to find in church adults, in any class of the community, who have not come there of their own personal inclination. Compulsory church attendance is mainly confined to the Army and to our public schools. Opinions differ as to its advisability, and some opponents of the practice have perhaps seen cause to modify their views after serving as chaplains to the Forces; but on the whole the evils resulting from compulsory religion may be said to outweigh the gains. However that may be, we are only concerned at the moment with those whose attendance at church is voluntary.

While it must be freely admitted that the motives for churchgoing which have been sketched above are grievously inadequate and incomplete, it would be a mistake to deny their value altogether. Those who only go to church because "it does them good" are at least on the right road. Their conception of religion is a one-sided one, but they feel the necessity for religion of some kind, and thus form a soil into which it should be possible to implant higher ideals and worthier

conceptions. This then is our problem, to awaken the instinct for worship as man's bounden duty and service, and as the primary object of church attendance. There are two alternative policies to be considered. The one aims at introducing all and sundry, no matter what their spiritual attainments, to what is acknowledged to be the highest form of worship, the Eucharist, with every outward accompaniment of ritual and ceremonial. It is thus, say the advocates of this policy, that we shall best bring home to the people the majesty and awfulness of God, dwelling in light unapproachable, and arouse in them the instinct to fall low on their knees before His footstool. Worship, they say, has decayed because our services have become cold and lifeless and commonplace. Restore something of the majesty and beauty of the past, introduce into your churches an atmosphere of mystery and other-worldliness, robe your priests in elaborate vestments, let the altar lights gleam through rolling clouds of incense, and you will create a craving for fellowship with the Unseen, which, reinforced by careful teaching, will express itself in humble and reverent worship. The other policy is that of learning to walk before you try to run, of taking men at the point at which they now stand, of gradually educating them in the meaning and value of prayer, with a view to leading them by slow degrees through petition and intercession to praise and adoration.

I am anxious to avoid the endless entanglements of current controverises, for we are not here concerned with doctrinal issues ; my object is only to examine

the two policies side by side as a practical means of attaining the end which both have in common, namely, the stimulation and development of the instinct for corporate prayer in its highest and fullest sense. We have too long allowed the question to be obscured by those whose chief pre-occupation is a passion for orthodoxy, and whose whole conception of religion seems to be wrapped up in the wearing or not wearing of a particular garment; the adopting or not adopting of certain postures; and meanwhile the churches have been steadily emptying. It is quite certain that opinions will always differ on the point at issue; temperament and tradition will weigh the scales on one side or the other; yet with our present object in view the decision seems clear enough. Granted all that may be said for the inspiring and uplifting influence of a perfectly rendered choral Eucharist; granted that such a service is the highest and noblest which can be offered by man before the Throne of God; granted—and this is a large assumption—that the congregation is fully instructed in the meaning of the service, we remain unconvinced that it is along such a road that we shall attain the end we have in view. One teacher may attempt to attract the child who has not yet learnt to read by placing before him an extravagantly illustrated story-book, faultlessly printed and sumptuously bound, in the hope that the little one may be stimulated by the beauty of the book to master its contents; another will laboriously lead her pupils through the drudgery of A B C, and so through words of one syllable gradually instil in slowly-growing minds a mastery of words and love of reading. One child in

a hundred may respond to the former treatment, the remainder will be discouraged by the length and difficulty of the words, and after looking at the pictures for a little while will give up in despair the attempt to extract any sense out of the letterpress which explains them. Similarly, in worship, to plunge a man who has scarcely learned to pray into the highest and most elaborate form of worship is little likely to achieve the end desired. Here and there abnormal souls may respond, in a larger number of cases music and atmosphere may attract, but the vast majority will only be bewildered and confused, while it does not necessarily follow that the true spirit of worship will be attained even by those who regularly attend such services. It is fatally easy to judge others by ourselves, to forget that we have come by long years of training to appreciate and enter into what we now enjoy, and to lose sight of the fact that what appeals to us is meaningless to the great mass of the population.

The alternative policy is that the services of the Church should be adapted to the progressive needs and capacities of churchgoers. We would reform and modify our forms of worship so as to lead men on from the lower to the higher, providing at each stage what is clearly within the comprehension and in harmony with the experience of those for whom each service is primarily intended. It is not, of course, proposed that congregations should be graded into classes like school children, or that individuals should be confined to this or that form of service ; but that our services should be definitely arranged with a view to the needs of broad classes of churchgoers, and that the individual

should then be left to attend whichever type of service he feels to be best suited to him. It will no doubt be said that the variety suggested already exists; we have our mission services and our solemn Evensongs, our plain celebrations and our choral Eucharists, and in addition a host of special services of every kind and variety—evangelistic, devotional, intercessional, services for men, for women, for children, guild offices, prayer meetings, and many others. The answer is that the existence of this heterogeneous mass of services proves the existence of the very need I am urging, but that they are chaotic and for the most part unauthorised, depending more upon the whims and fancies of the parson than upon the necessities of particular congregations. Moreover, these additional services are rarely attended by those with whom we are now concerned; the average churchgoer confines himself to the regular services prescribed for Sunday use, and it is to these that we ought to devote our chief attention, and in which we ought to press for reasonable reform.

It is more than probable that we shall continue to have with us the host of special services to which we have referred—though it is open to question whether the clergy would not often be far more profitably employed in the homes and streets of their parishes, or in their studies, than in incessantly ministering in church to the same little handful of the more devout members of their flocks—and it is clearly impossible for authority to lay down precise directions with regard to the innumerable offices which have by now received the sanction of customary use. The consent of episcopal silence may fairly be claimed on behalf of all forms

which, while they are not to be found in the Book of Common Prayer, have not been specifically forbidden by lawful authority. In the case of those which the Ordinary has definitely refused to sanction common honesty will leave no doubt as to the course to be pursued.

I propose, therefore, to deal only with the regular Sunday services of the Church, that is to say with Morning and Evening Prayer, and the Holy Communion. In spite of all efforts to dethrone them from popular favour, it is to the former that the ordinary or elementary churchgoer will in all probability continue to find his way ; in one class of society the morning office, in another the evening, will be most popular. Our policy, as has already been hinted, would not be to discourage this tendency, but so to modify these services as to fulfil the purpose of educating those who attend them in the spirit of prayer and worship, and of thus leading them on to desire and appreciate something higher and better than they already know. It cannot be denied that in their present form Matins and Evensong are inadequate ; they fall between two stools, and neither satisfy those in whom the instinct of worship is highly developed, nor those who need to have that instinct awakened by the use of a simple and intelligible form of prayer. It is in the interests of the latter class that I desire to see these services reformed, but so reformed as not to sacrifice the general form and structure of the offices as they have come down to us. One thing seems certain, namely, that a liturgical form of service is desirable and indeed indispensable for the carrying out of our policy.

Generally speaking the so-called evangelistic or mission services which are provided on Sunday evenings in a good many parishes do not attract the congregations for whom they are designed, and do little or nothing to create in those who do attend them an appetite for a worthier and more dignified type of worship. I shall doubtless be reminded of the popularity of the free and easy sacred "sing-songs" which are so common in the Army to-day, but I am inclined to believe that an inquiry amongst the men would show that there is no great difference in their minds between singing secular songs on weekdays and joining in hymns on Sunday. It is the tune, not the words, which counts, and in any case it is doubtful whether there is much permanent religious value in the singing of a succession of rather emotional hymns, followed by a short talk and a few words of prayer; the tendency seems rather to deaden in the men a taste for genuine worship.

Assuming then that a liturgical service will best meet the need which we are considering, we must first ask ourselves what are the legitimate criticisms which can be brought against our present forms of Morning and Evening Prayer. They are sufficiently obvious, and have been so widely canvassed that I need scarcely do more than tabulate them.

1. The language of many of the prayers is out of date, and therefore unintelligible if not actually misleading to the majority. "We have erred and strayed like lost sheep," "Graft in our hearts," "the continual dew of Thy blessing," are meaningless phrases to dwellers in great cities; "there is no health in us," "thy saving health," "the healthful

spirit of thy grace," have physical rather than spiritual associations for most; "inestimable love," "unfeignedly thankful," "thy special grace preventing us," "acknowledging our wretchedness," "true and laudable service," "sore let and hindered," are but random examples of words which have passed out of current use and either lost or changed their meaning. So long as our prayers are couched in such language "how shall he that occupieth the place of the unlearned say 'Amen,' seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?"

2. The subject-matter of the prayers is unsatisfactory; it is too general and abstract for common use. The favoured few who can read their particular petitions into prayers of a general nature do not feel this defect, but it must always be remembered that only a small minority have the power to translate the abstract into the concrete. Most men can only call a spade a spade, and if they are to pray with reality at all the prayers must speak simply and definitely of what they know and feel and need. With the exception of half a dozen prayers for use on special occasions and the Litany, which is too long and embraces too many subjects for beginners in prayer, this need is ignored in the Prayer-book. There is no opportunity given for definite prayer for the work of a parish, for children, for foreign missions, for those engaged in industry, for emigrants and colonists—to name a few subjects only out of a list which might be almost indefinitely extended.

3. There remains the question of the Psalms and lessons. No one will deny that the Psalter contains the most moving and inspiring religious poetry in the

world, but two criticisms may fairly be brought against our present use of it. In the first place the Psalms are obviously of unequal value from the point of view of edification on the one hand and intelligibility on the other. It is impossible to defend the use of the imprecatory Psalms in Christian worship[1]—"Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow" harmonises ill with the injunction to love our enemies—and it is unfortunate, to say the least of it, that a manifestly un-Christian instinct, which it is sufficiently difficult to repress at such times as these, should be able to claim the sanction of use in the Christian Church. There are also many Psalms which, while they were full of comfort and inspiration to the Jewish nation, which could fully enter into their historical associations, have little meaning and therefore little spiritual value for Englishmen of our day, ignorant as they are of the incidents of Jewish history to which they allude. There are, moreover, isolated passages in not a few of the Psalms which are frankly unintelligible. How many of those who cheerfully sing "or ever your pots be made hot with thorns, so let indignation vex him even as a thing that is raw," have the vaguest idea of the meaning of the words which they profess to be singing to the glory of God? It will at once be said that these obscure passages often occur in Psalms which are otherwise helpful and inspiring; the obvious answer is that the offending verses should be deleted, or, if that is thought to be impracticable, that it is surely preferable to sacrifice the psalm altogether rather than introduce

[1] These words were written before the outcry arose against the action of Convocation in this matter. We live and learn.

utterly meaningless language into our public worship. The very first requirement, if prayer and praise are to be real, is that they should be simple and intelligible.

The length of the Psalms prescribed for daily use is another legitimate cause for criticism; the average number of verses prescribed is forty, and when, in Morning Prayer, we add to these some sixty verses in the Canticles, we find ourselves singing a hundred verses in a single service. It is little wonder that many worshippers occupy themselves before the clergy enter in reckoning the number of verses to be said or sung that morning, and breathe a sigh of relief when they find them to be below the average.

Similar criticisms apply to the lectionary. The lessons are too long, they are often unedifying, and they are frequently quite out of harmony with the teaching of the Church's seasons. Few ordinary churchgoers can derive much help or comfort from listening to long passages from the Pentateuch or the historical books, or to isolated fragments from some complicated doctrinal argument of St. Paul. Simple minds must moreover be hopelessly confused by hearing an account of the Crucifixion of Our Lord read to them on one of the Sundays after Easter, or by listening to the incidents which followed the Resurrection on a Sunday in Advent; yet both are liable to occur and do actually occur in the present year.

But enough of criticism; it is time to turn to constructive proposals. The advocate of Prayer-book revision is always apt to be met by a blank *non possumus*. Our services are fixed by law and without the consent of Parliament it is impossible to alter

them. We need not dwell upon the fact that such an argument would have proved fatal to nine out of every ten reforms which have ever been carried through in Church or State. It is an argument which puts an end to all possibility of progress, and is the favourite refuge of the multitude which loves not change. Of course there will be difficulties in the way, of course the task will not be an easy one, but that is no reason why a beginning should not be made, and made at once, so that we may be ready with a simpler and more elastic form of service for the time when the men come home.

It is a little difficult to make concrete proposals at the moment, because, as is well known, Convocation is actually engaged in drawing up an additional form of late evening service to be used where Evensong has already been said. I venture to suggest that this is a mistake; what is wanted is not an *additional* service, but an *alternative* one, to be used in churches and chapels in which Evensong is not legally compulsory. An additional form will necessarily differ very widely from our present Office; it will probably be an entirely new service, with the result that it will almost inevitably fail to commend itself to the conservative instincts of those who have long been familiar with the Prayer-book service. The outcome will be that in a comparatively small number of working-class parishes this additional service will be introduced, probably at an inconvenient hour, the majority of churchgoers will continue to attend the usual service at the usual hour, and the new service will before long share the fate of similar experiments in the past. The congregations attending it will be small, the clergy will be discouraged,

and after a time the additional service will be quietly dropped. But if the policy of an alternative service be adopted there will be no need to depart from the general structure of the service with which churchgoers are familiar, nor from the hour at which they are accustomed to go to church. The new form will be Evensong as we know it, simplified and brought into harmony with modern needs, and those who attend it will not feel that they are being inveigled into something new-fangled and not quite respectable; they will instead recognise an old friend in a new and more appropriate dress. It would be legal to use such a service in all mission churches, in churches where the Prayer-book services are or can be said at another hour, in college and public school chapels, and in the chapels attached to hospitals, workhouses, and other similar institutions. Were an authorised form in existence it would certainly be widely used in such places, and valuable experience would be gained against the day when the Church secures liberty to vary her services without the intervention of the State, when one may fairly hope that the alternative service would become the normal Sunday office.

The following are the lines along which such a form might be drawn up. Keeping our present service as a basis, the simple Confession and Absolution of Compline might be substituted for those at present in use. A limited number of psalms should be carefully selected with a view to their simplicity and suitability to modern needs, and these should be arranged according to the Sundays of the Church's year, and not by the days of the month,

not more than twenty verses on the average being appointed for each service. The lectionary should be entirely redrafted for the Sunday services, passages of from twelve to twenty verses should be chosen, care being taken that they should be really edifying, in harmony with the teaching of the season, and having a connection of thought between the Old Testament and New Testament lessons. After the Creed some such rubric as the following might be inserted : " Here shall follow the Collect for the day and other prayers at the discretion of the minister." In this connection a varied collection of prayers covering every modern need should be drawn up and issued by authority. Many such collections have in recent years been compiled and published privately ; we urgently need an official and authorised book of additional prayers. Granted that they might lack the literary form and beauty of our present Collects, the fact that they would voice modern needs would be a gain far outweighing the possible loss. If John Smith and Thomas Jones are to learn to pray with reality they must be allowed to ask for the things they really need, and to ask for them in the language of their own day, not in that of the Elizabethans, however perfect the latter may have been. The service might close with a couple of set prayers said by the whole congregation, one perhaps for protection through the coming night, as, for example, the beautiful and perfectly simple prayer commencing " Almighty Father, Who in Thy divine mercy dost cover the earth with the curtain of darkness that all the weary may rest," and the other a prayer of thanksgiving. This common saying of the

prayers is a point which has not been sufficiently considered. It seems obvious that the congregation will enter into the prayers with far greater reality if they are allowed to repeat the words with the minister, or sentence by sentence after him, and not merely listen to him saying them on their behalf.

The form of service which I have roughly sketched out has been in use in a South London church during the past two years and has won the warm approval both of the regular congregation and of casual visitors. Including a twenty minutes' sermon and the usual hymns, it lasts almost exactly an hour; the little booklet in which it is printed, including fifty selected Psalms, but not, of course, the special prayers, costs twopence a copy to produce—were a large number printed the price would probably be not more than a penny.

Is it too much to expect that were a service on these lines generally adopted it would go far to restore reality, to make men and women of all classes feel that prayer and churchgoing had an intimate relation with their daily lives, and to create in them the beginnings at least of the instinct of worship? The service to which we have referred is for evening use, but the morning service might well be treated in the same way.

It is with a good deal more diffidence that we approach the subject of the Holy Communion, for to our shame this service has been a battle-ground for generations, and with however honest a desire to be uncontroversial we discuss it, it is almost impossible to avoid giving offence in one direction or another.

All I can do is to assure my readers that I am genuinely anxious to avoid partisanship, and to implore them to consider the whole question on its merits and, so far as is possible, without prepossessions. It has been said that the general aim is to provide a graded series of services appropriate to the needs and spiritual attainments of broad classes of church-goers, and I have attempted to sketch what may be called an elementary service suitable for beginners in the art of worship. This will be in the main subjective, that is to say the chief emphasis will be laid upon our human needs, temporal and spiritual, expressed in simple and intelligible prayers, together with psalms and hymns and readings from God's Word, the primary object of which will be to stimulate higher instincts and to inspire to nobler ideals. The next stage, according to our programme, will still lay stress upon the subjective side, but it will bring the worshipper into closer touch with the divine by introducing more of the mystical, unworldly element, and it will seek to accustom him to a more objective type of worship. It will supply his developing spiritual needs at the same time that it teaches the reality of the Divine Presence. The final stage will be purely objective, consisting of unmixed praise and adoration. The first stage is met by a revised and simplified Morning and Evening Prayer, the second by the Holy Communion in its simplest form, the third by the Eucharist with such varying elaborations as may suit the varying needs of different congregations.

Is it too bold to suggest that the time has come for a recognition of the fact that the Sacrament of the Body

and Blood of Christ contains within it what are to all intents and purposes two separate services ? It is the highest means of grace and at the same time the highest act of worship. My belief is that the gain would be enormous if these diverse elements in the service were to be frankly recognised and, broadly speaking, kept apart. Might we not at one celebration lay all the emphasis upon the humble receiving of the sacred Food, at another concentrate upon the joyful and triumphant worship of the Crucified and Risen Lord ?

The former would, of course, take place early on every Sunday morning, sometimes at midday, and—dare I venture to suggest it ?—sometimes also in the evening for those in town and country for whom a morning service is almost an impossibility. It would attempt to recover something of the simplicity of the Communion of the early Christians ; the service would be shortened so that on normal Sundays it should be over in half an hour ; the suggestion that it should commence at the Invitation, " Ye that do truly and earnestly repent," is worthy of consideration. Where it is at all practicable the church might be so arranged that the Elements could be carried by the priest to the people instead of their coming to the altar rail to receive them, a perfectly possible plan in any church where chairs are provided in place of pews. On high festivals an introit hymn might be sung, but otherwise there should be no music, and the whole service said in the natural voice. In country parishes the celebration might sometimes on summer days be held in the open air, just as in fine weather we are accustomed

to take our meals out of doors. Utter simplicity with a minimum of ritual should be the dominant note throughout. Those who have had the joy and privilege of celebrating for our men at the Front will know how enormously these simple points add to the inspiration of the service. We have had our Communions in the orchards of little French villages, where we placed a borrowed table under the shadow of the fruit trees, while the men knelt here and there on the bare grass around, and the peaceful cows gazed wonderingly at the sight. We have celebrated behind our lines with an ammunition box for altar and a shell-hole for the Sanctuary, amidst the thunder of guns which ever and again drowned the familiar words, and when the time for Communion came we passed with the Bread of Life from man to man as they knelt in disorder where they could find kneeling space on the shell-torn ground. And whether in the peaceful orchard or on the field of battle we all felt a reality in the service, a nearness to God, a true feeding upon Christ, an actual sharing of the one Bread which we have seldom experienced in the more formal celebrations of our churches at home. Partly, no doubt, it was the effect of the peculiar surroundings of the moment; even more, I believe, the sense of reality was due to the absolute simplicity of it all; all accretions and externals were stripped away, we were just a band of brothers breaking bread together with gladness and singleness of heart.

Finally we come to the Eucharist as the culminating point in our series of services, the Church's supreme act of worship. Frankly we feel that it is doubtful whether this use of the Sacrament is logically defensible;

it seems clear that the service was instituted and made use of by the early Church as a means of grace and not as an act of worship. But the development may be regarded as a legitimate one which has been inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit. There are, of course, very many loyal Churchmen who still shrink from the idea of a celebration which is not primarily a Communion, and they are perfectly entitled to their view ; but the Eucharistic element is so strong in our Office, and it seems so desirable to distinguish between the twofold object which the service contains, that we do not hesitate to advocate the use of the service as a great act of praise. I do not propose to dwell at length upon the Holy Communion viewed in this light : any revisions that may seem desirable should be dealt with by experts, for the issues at stake are too serious for incompetent treatment. My only plea is that we should not attempt to establish a universal standard in the accessories of the service. Merbecke's setting sung heartily by the whole congregation may be as genuine an act of adoration as the most faultless rendering of far more elaborate music. The great point to be aimed at is to emphasise the fact that at this service we have come to worship God ; at other times we come to church to make petition for our needs, or to feed together upon the Bread of Life as our first object ; now we are here to forget ourselves, our needs, our difficulties, to lose ourselves in the praise of the Eternal. The ritual may be elaborate or comparatively simple, the music may be as nearly perfect as man can achieve, or it may be almost commonplace ; the thing that matters is the intention in the hearts

of the worshippers. If they have first learned by experience that God is a Father Who answers believing prayer, if they have gone on to find that He supplies their souls with Bread from heaven, they will have little difficulty, be the service simple or ornate, in lifting up their hearts and giving thanks to Him in the Church's Eucharist.

I have tried to put into words ideas which are present to many minds, and will only say in conclusion that, though I have not actually quoted what men have said upon this subject, very much of what I have written arises directly from experience gained in the war and from conversations with soldiers at the Front and elsewhere.

IX

INSTRUCTION IN PRAYER

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IX

INSTRUCTION IN PRAYER

We are nearly all agreed that the great need of the Church of England to-day, especially in view of our armies returning after the war, is reconstruction. The time demands that we should not criticise those who are venturing on new methods and trying experiments, but that each of us should do his or her part in building up our people in the faith and practice of the Catholic Church. We have numbers of priests ready for self-sacrifice—and they may be counted on for that—they are willing to go forward if they can see their way. So too we have numbers among the laity who look to us to lead them. In the Navy and Army 75 per cent. have entered their names as Church of England men. They have been, as a rule, baptized by the Church, many of them confirmed, have made at least one Communion, and look to be laid in the grave with the service of the Church read over them. If these are to find religion, it is in the Church they expect to find it ; we have on the whole the good will of the nation.

Foundations have been laid and settled. There is

to be no tampering with the Creeds or the Sacraments ; we are sure as to our Orders and are determined to hand them on to those who shall come after, as our forefathers in the Faith handed them down to us.

Thus, as the Church instructed us, so we in turn have taught the children in our day and Sunday schools, in preparing them for Confirmation, and in sermons innumerable. Yet since the war broke out we have discovered that most of this teaching was learnt by the scholars only as an accomplishment that would tell in passing the diocesan inspectors, but was to have no more moral and spiritual effect in their lives than their drill in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Leaving school, they dropped churchgoing and prayer, just as they dropped the recitation of the multiplication table. For our Church services have not been led up to by our teaching, and were never properly comprehended by the greater number of those whom we taught. In almost every part of the services in church there are words and phrases which have no meaning for the ordinary man ; if he is a churchgoer, he accepts the service as it stands, without taking any intelligent part in it ; it has become to him merely a form. Even the Lord's Prayer is too often repeated mechanically by him, without attaching any particular meaning to the words.

It is hardly better with the books of devotion given to our Confirmation candidates. These books are founded on the Prayer-book, and written in the same language ; they are, as a rule, beyond both the intellectual and spiritual level of their recipients. For a time they may have tried to use them, but finding no

help therein, they gave them up and put them on the shelf or in the box, only to be brought out and shown to a visitor as interesting memorials of the occasion when they were given.

When these children whom we have taught to pray do pray—it is rarely enough that they do—they either merely repeat the Lord's Prayer and perhaps some form used by them in childhood and still remembered, or else they simply ask what they want from God, much as Jews or Mohammedans might do, without any reference to our Lord as the One Mediator between God and man; for the accustomed closing words "through Jesus Christ our Lord" are generally no more than a meaningless formula to them. The rector of a large church in which I had been giving a lecture on prayer told me afterwards that a Church schoolmaster had said to him that he personally did not believe in pleading with our Lord, that he instructed the children when they prayed to go to God as they would to their parents, and that was enough.

Here surely is the clue to the situation of which we complain. We can hardly wonder that people tell us they find no help in prayer and therefore have given it up, since our Lord Himself has said "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." If those who pray neglect this One Way to the Father, how can they expect the blessing?

A wounded officer with whom I was travelling by train is a case in point. He told me that before the war he had been preparing for Holy Orders, but that he had given up the idea, since at the Front he had

found that his prayers did not help him, though he continued to say them from a sense of duty. At home, he said, he had prayed as a matter of course, though without much thought as to what he expected from his prayers, but out at the Front it was different; there he was forced to ask himself how much help were such prayers to him, and he was bound to answer that they were none. He added that other officers in his regiment said the same thing and had given them up. The same story was told me by a mother who wrote to me, much distressed because when she had asked her boy just going out to France to continue his prayers he had answered that he had left them off because they did not help him. Yet many men want to pray. A soldier said to me that he had not known how much religion there was in his platoon until just before an attack, when first one and then another knelt down, until nearly all were upon their knees. Another officer told me that before making a charge near Ypres he had wanted to say a prayer, but that every one he had ever learnt went out of his mind, and he went over the parapet saying nothing at all to God.

And having given up prayer, they have forgotten the main facts of the Christian religion. I know how largely this is true from my own experience in preparing men for Confirmation. On one occasion I became rather impatient with a man whom I had instructed two or three times, but who seemed to have learnt nothing at all. His answer was that it was a long time since he had thought about such things, and that it was difficult to begin all over again. A friend of mine,

the vicar of his parish, doubted what almost all of the chaplains say about the ignorance of the men, and told me he could vouch for every one of his lads who had gone out that they knew the facts of the Creed. I wished that I could have heard him catechise them, I think his eyes would have been opened. The fact is that we of the clergy have taken too much for granted. A short time ago, a middle-aged educated man, on my saying that the Nonconformists made their people believe in grace, asked me what grace was. Yet he is a communicant and goes regularly to church every Sunday. The result of all this is, that God has become to our people an abstract idea, or a mere Fate. I was one day walking round the trenches when some men called me back to ask me if I thought it mattered if they put their heads over the parapet or not, since, they said, "When you have to die, then die you will, and not before." The idea of a Personal God, a loving Father, Who ever watches over us for good, and with Whom we have to co-operate, seemed never to have entered into their minds and hearts. It appears to be necessary to say this again and again, since there are both clergymen and laymen who believe all is well, that all we have to do is to continue on the accustomed lines, only perhaps giving more intellectual sermons on Bible difficulties, important, no doubt, for some, but altogether failing to supply the need of thousands who know nothing about the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Risen Life given to us in Jesus Christ. What then are we to do? Surely the answer is plain. Let us go back to the Bible, and there see how St. Paul took pains and laboured

to vitalise Gospel truth by his teaching, so that it became a living power in the lives of the men and women who learned it, not a mere intellectual formula to be put to no use and soon forgotten, as it is by the greater number of those whom we teach to-day.

We read in 1 Cor. i. 2, that the Apostle is writing to those " who in every place call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ." And in Acts ii. 21, we read " whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved." These and other texts seem to show that it was the constant practice of the Christians in those times, wherever they were and whatever they were doing, to remember the Presence of Christ, who He is, what He has done, and is still doing for us now in Heaven, and to call upon Him by each event of His Sacred Life to save them and help them in every danger, trial, and perplexity. In this way they constantly called to mind not only that He had died for them and for them had risen from the dead, but that for them He was alive for ever, and that they had constant fellowship with Him in His ascended Life. It was a victorious prayer, ever claiming His victory as theirs, for as they pleaded with Him by each event of His Life, they liberated for their immediate help and comfort every power He had won for them by His holy Nativity, His precious Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. And we know that the result was that these poor ignorant Christians, mostly of the slave class, with but few of the rich or educated among them, were so strengthened that they were able to brave all the cruelties that their enemies could inflict upon them, until their constancy conquered even their

foes, and at last the world of that day was converted from within and Rome became Christian. Besides receiving this wonderful power to endure, the Christians drew the Holy Heart of Jesus towards them, as a child might draw the heart of his father by running to him as he comes from work and throwing his arms round him, saying "Oh Father, you have done so much for me and I love you so much, do give me what I want!" The father delights to see the love of his child expressed in such ways, and to know that his own love is in some measure understood and requited. When he is so approached, he feels much more ready to do what he is asked than if the request were made in some indifferent and ordinary way. So did the early Christians call upon the Name of the Lord, and draw all Christ's love towards them, showing their own love and receiving from Him in return such comfort and uplifting that He became to them more and more "the chiefest among ten thousand—and altogether lovely." We seem to-day especially to need such prayer in our Church in order to lead our people to realise Christ's love, and to draw His love towards them, and with it all the power which He has won for our use and help in the trials and temptations of life; and also to go in the only true way to God, the Way which our Lord Himself is.

At the Reformation all the popular devotions of the people were swept away, and the public offices of Matins and Evensong of our Church, which before were for the most part said by the priests and religious alone, were substituted for the use of the faithful in general. But these have proved to be by themselves

too advanced for the common use of simple people, and we are discovering that what we need now is a devotion that shall be shorter and simpler, that all can say anywhere and at any time, and that will lead us on to realise that personal experience of our Lord more and more as our Friend and Brother, our Lord and our God. Such a devotion as this will also prepare our mind for the public offices of the Church. There is an ancient and popular method of prayer long forgotten among us which seems just what we want to-day; by it each great event in our Lord's life is taken separately and in order, and pleaded before Him. Thus:

By Thy Holy Nativity in Bethlehem, save us and help us, O Lord!

By Thy precious Death and Burial, save us and help us, O Lord!

By Thy glorious Resurrection, save us and help us, O Lord!

By Thine all-prevailing Intercession in Heaven, save us and help us, O Lord!

And so on.

Certain of these events are commemorated in the first part of each group of the petitions, in order that by calling them to mind we may approach Jesus Christ with greater confidence, and also that we may remind Him of them and thus move His Heart to grant that which we ask in His Name. Some of them—such as His Death and Resurrection—are the direct causes of our salvation, others are only remotely connected with it, but in either case all are mentioned in the popular method of prayer I am referring to, for the same purpose. In this way people were given a simple devotion which all could remember, since it embodies the chief events of the Life of our Lord,

taken in order. It is founded on the facts of the Creed, which being thus pondered over come to life in the hearts and minds of those who use it. It can be used anywhere and at any time : men to-day have told me that they have used it even in a charge.

The devotion awakens new interest in religion. A chaplain one day asked me to come and see a patient in hospital whom he had found using this devotion and who explained to him how he used it. What struck the chaplain was the interest which the man took in his prayers. He was full of it, and it had made him wish to be confirmed and become a communicant ; in fact it had changed his whole religious outlook, which, before he had used the Chaplet, had been purely formal.

It leads men to the Father by the one and only true way of approach. As Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life : no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

It supplies us with a method of prayer which all can use and enter into and understand, yet which none can outgrow, for the greatest saint can never get beyond meditating on the Life of our Lord and pleading it with God according to his needs.

It creates an atmosphere of religion vigorous enough to withstand the spiritually depressing atmosphere of the world ; and when the lads go out into the world in their several occupations, it prevents them from forgetting the religious instruction they received in day and Sunday schools, since it is to them a constant reminder of the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Risen Life of our Lord.

But if we are to succeed in persuading men to pray in this or in any other way, we must continually remind them in our instructions and sermons of the following considerations :—

1. *That God wants our prayer.* That it is our means of becoming fellow-workers with God. A wise father will not give all he wants to his child without the child taking trouble on his part, for the father knows that if he does his gifts will not be appreciated. A well-to-do Lincolnshire farmer of the old school once told his son he might have as good a horse as he liked, but that he must feed and groom it himself. That farmer was a wise man; he intended that his son should appreciate his gift, and should get to know and be fond of his horse, by taking trouble about it. So it is with God. He is willing and ready to give us all that we need, but He waits till we are willing to take the trouble to ask Him for it, for He knows that He does so for our good. It is as if I were to go to a relation and complain that he had given what I specially wanted to someone else, and he were to answer that, since I had never troubled to ask him for what I wanted, I could not wonder that I did not get it.

2. *God wants us to persevere in prayer.* Christ, Who alone could say "I know the Father," has taught us that the way to get our petitions answered is not merely to ask once for what we want and then to leave it, but to "cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with us" (St. Luke xviii. 7), and that we must be importunate with God. The man who at midnight sought to borrow three loaves of his neighbour for the entertainment of an unexpected guest

got what he wanted by being importunate in asking. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth" (St. Luke xi. 9, 10). We know that Christ Himself repeated His prayer three times in Gethsemane, saying the same words. We may therefore in the same way repeat our petitions that we may learn to pray more earnestly. And as we do so, we find that they are not vain repetitions, which they necessarily would be if we were to take no trouble in trying to think what we were saying, but that, on the contrary, each repetition, made with attention and increasing earnestness, adds intensity to the meaning of the words and to the heart's desire, as in the case of our Lord's thrice repeated prayer in the Garden. Unless we use the help of repetition in our prayer, many of us find great difficulty in concentrating our attention on what we wish to say. The brief petitions may easily succeed one another so quickly that we may not have time to take in their deep significance, and so they may pass without our having prayed any one of them with the meaning and earnestness which we desire to put into them. Besides, it is natural for us to repeat. We all know how a child, if he wants anything very much, will run to his parent and say "Do, do, do give me this!" It is the same if we want anything very much from God. We have, I suppose, at times all of us prayed thus, and perhaps in a bitterness of spirit pleaded with Him for help and comfort, and how many know that it has not been in vain!

When we most want to pray, it is often when we

do not wish to ask many things, but rather to keep to the one which is the whole object of our desire at the time—such as safety for some loved one in the war, or victory for our forces, or conversion for one gone astray ; and we need a method which will enable us to concentrate upon this for some considerable time or as long as we are able to give to our devotions. Even when we say the Lord's Prayer, how many of us find that the petitions follow each other so fast that we have sometimes come to the middle of it without having really prayed at all, and thus all the first and perhaps the most important part of the prayer has been lost. But as we *repeat* our petitions, we learn to be importunate in our prayer and to " cry day and night " unto God to save us and help us. He knows our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking ; and therefore we need not spend time in elaborating them in detail. It is the soul's personal approach to God that needs to be realised more and more deeply by reiteration, and the Merits of our Lord Jesus Christ through Whom we plead for help as the needs of each day press upon us. We know perhaps how wearisome it is to go through long lists of intercessions, as we have lately tried to do, and how the result of the Intercession services sometimes has been only to discourage people and make them drop away after the first few months of the war.

3. *We must remember our position as sinners before God.* This we may learn from the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (St. Matt. xviii. 24), although its primary intention was to teach the duty of forgiveness. A servant is brought before his king and accused of

owing him ten thousand talents—that is, at least, two million five hundred thousand pounds. As he has nothing to pay, he is in a hopeless position and is condemned to slavery together with his wife and children. And we are in a like hopeless position in regard to God as long as we stand upon our own merits. It is useless to say that we have done no harm to anyone, or that we are as good as others, or that we have worked hard and been upright and honest all our days. Such claims are irrelevant ; the whole life of redeemed man is his debt to God, and the failure of each of us is beyond calculation ; in face of our infinite indebtedness, any particular merits we may claim count for nothing. Our only true attitude before God is to humble ourselves as did the servant in the parable, and plead for mercy. We can ask ourselves have we ever done so ? Have we ever felt ourselves under condemnation ? It is true we are unable always to reach very deep feelings of contrition, but we can acknowledge we have no righteousness of our own, and believe this in our hearts to be true. Then, and then only, we can plead the one perfect Offering for Sin, which has been made on our behalf, and which is continually being pleaded by our Great High Priest in Heaven, Who allows us to unite our petitions with His own.

4. *The value of united prayer.* Christ has said, " If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father Which is in Heaven." Our religion is social. United to Christ, we are all made members of one body in Him. Christ is the Vine, we are the branches, living with one and the same heavenly life in Him.

We are no longer mere souls to be saved individually, but are all built up together as living stones in one Spiritual Temple, Christ's Body, the Church. This is expressed in the Lord's Prayer, which begins, not "My Father," but "Our Father." In this way the Bible teaches us that we are never to regard ourselves as mere individuals, or to separate ourselves from our brethren in religion as if that were our own private and personal affair alone. We are promised a special blessing when we are united together in common prayer. Some years ago I was on a holiday in Pisa. Going into a church there one evening, I found it full of women, evidently a women's guild, who were saying their prayers aloud, without any priest to lead their devotion. I felt that those women might teach us a lesson in united prayer; they had gone together to a church to pray, apparently feeling that it was a spiritual work best done in fellowship, in which everyone could help all the rest, and in which God was most glorified when no voice was wanting to the common appeal. How many of us in our ordinary congregations realise this? Might we not have bands of people who at stated times, and with permission from the incumbents of their parishes, would meet to pray aloud and together in church for whatever objects they desired? For this it would be necessary that they should have a recognised method of prayer which all would know and be able to join in, and I think the method which I have described above would prove to supply what is wanted. One day when I was instructing a small Confirmation class outside a billet in France, I was joined by first one and then another,

till I had about eight or ten men with me. When I asked them why they came, since they had all been confirmed, they answered that they were accustomed to say the devotion together, and that as they thought we were saying it they would like to join in. These too had realised the help of united prayer, and were accustomed to practise it like the early Christians, calling upon the Name of the Lord, in spite of the distractions of the ordinary soldiers' billet.

5. *Fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God* (Eph. ii. 19). Has the article of our Creed, in which we say that we "believe in the communion of saints," any meaning for the majority of our people? Is not Heaven to them an unknown and an unknowable place far away, in which God, Whom they know little about, dwells alone? They need to be told that they are already citizens of Heaven—fellow citizens with the saints departed, with whom we are all of one household already in the Catholic Church. They need to learn that the saints behold us, not with idle sympathy, as spectators at a football match, who look on but have never played the game themselves, but that the martyrs and confessors and all the saints are with us, aiding us in our daily conflict as our comrades in the same cause, having themselves fought a good fight and won it. The Apostle wrote to the desponding Hebrews who were likely to go back to Judaism to hearten them in the struggle. He reminded them that they were already "come unto the Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem," and "to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 22–3). Our people also thus need to be lifted up to realise the heavenly Jerusalem,

and to contemplate "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," surrounded by those "spirits of just men made perfect," who have a real part in our prayers and sacraments. What a change it would make in our worship if when we came into church we realised that those who through hundreds of years had worshipped there still worship with us! What a congregation we should feel still surrounds us; what a body of prayer and praise would go up to God, from both those who are still fighting, still running their race, and those who have won their rest but who still worship with us! What a support in discouragement; what joy and what wonder! All the church would be filled with awe and mystery, everything in it would have its meaning, and that meaning not of this world, but of Heaven.

In the growth of Spiritualism among us, we recognise the disastrous result of our failure in teaching this meaning of "the communion of saints." Men and women crave for some intercourse with their dead. If they are not taught the truth as to how they may have it in right ways, they will try wrong ones, and seek what they need through mediums and other irreverent experimentalists in the supernatural sphere —methods that have always been condemned by the discipline of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, how greatly it uplifts and cheers us to know that when we worship we are worshipping with the saints, and that we have the help of their prayers. I have more than once been spoken to, after preaching on the communion of saints, by people who have thanked me and said that they are sure that when they ask

for the prayers of those saintly and beloved ones who are with the departed they are not doing what is wrong.

6. *And the angels.* The Apostle says "Ye are come to an innumerable company of angels" (Heb. xii. 22); and our Lord told Nathanael that hereafter he "would see Heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man"—not upon a visionary ladder which would vanish away on his waking from sleep, but on the Son of Man Himself. Wherever there is a communicant living in grace, there is set up that ladder reaching from him to Heaven, and on it are the angels ascending to take up his prayers, and descending to bring back their answers. We must learn to open our eyes and see with Elisha's servant at Dothan the horses and chariots ready to help and defend us, wherever we are and whatever may be our danger. How many have believed in this angelic host surrounding them in the war, when they have heard the ping of the bullets passing close to their heads, or when shells have burst only a few yards away and yet they have not been hurt. Think of St. Peter's angel that brought him out of prison, and of St. Paul's testimony in the shipwreck: "There stood by me this night the Angel of God, Whose I am and Whom I serve" (Acts xxvii. 23). Think of little children's angels, of whom Christ said that they always beheld the Face of His Father in Heaven; think of the Angel of the Agony, whose help the Lord did not refuse when He was left alone by His Apostles in the Garden. And when we pray in church the angels are there with us, praying and worshipping in aweful adoration the

God Whom they see and Whom one day we hope to see with them.

7. *That there are meeting-places here on earth between God and man.* The Israelites had the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and God said: "There will I meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat" (Ex. xxv. 22), and "I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat" (Lev. xvi. 2). So afterwards, when they had come into the Promised Land, although Solomon said "Behold, Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee, how much less this House which I have built," yet when he had made an end of praying, "the fire came down from Heaven" and "the priests could not enter into the House of the Lord because the Glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's House." Therefore every Jew was ordered to appear before the Lord his God three times a year in the place which He should choose. It seems that Christ regularly obeyed the command. He loved the Temple. He called it "My Father's House" and "a House of Prayer." When His Mother and St. Joseph had lost Him for three days, He answered, "How is it that ye sought Me?" They might have known that He would have been in His "Father's House." And in the last book of the Old Testament we read the prophecy "From the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, My Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering" (Mal. i. 11)—that is, the offering of fine flour. So it has come to pass. In every place we have our churches, meeting-places between God and man, where the Holy

Bread, the Eucharist, is continually offered. As our Lord promises a special presence and a special blessing where two or three meet in His Name, so is there still a special presence and a special blessing promised when we gather together as His family to meet Him in His House. And practically we find that when people neglect to go to church their religion dies away sooner or later. For our religion, as I have said, is social, and if a man wilfully neglects corporate prayer and worship he will find that the power of his religion becomes less and less. A colonel of a regiment said to me one day that it did not do to give up parade services, for if he did so, he presently found a difference in the men. I believe that this is true, the recognition of God in the parade service has a hidden influence on the men, though they themselves may not know it, and if the sermon goes home to their hearts, they remember it and talk it over. Unfortunately at the Front we have no churches, so have to extemporise and make whatever place is found available to look as much like a church as possible. The altar with cross and candles and the surplice of the minister contribute to this.

At home we have opened our churches, but the result has not been encouraging. People come in quite reverently ; the men take off their hats, and walk round and look at the architecture, the monuments, and the decorations, and are content to leave the sacred place, without one prayer to God, or as it seems without even a thought that He is there and in His Providence has provided the place and the opportunity that they might meet Him there. Why is it ? It seems not to have

dawned on them that the church is their Father's House, and that they are at home there, as children are in their father's presence—at home with God and very near Heaven. Would not their Father like them to speak a word of love and reverence to Him? What would an earthly father think of his boy who came into his presence, looked round, and then went out with never a dutiful word or sign? And what must our Heavenly Father think of His children who never say a word to Him as they come into His House? Have we nothing to say when we enter a church? We teach our children gracious manners, we hear a mother say to her child "You must speak to your father with love and respect." So we must teach our people to speak reverently to God, Who loves to hear them. A man wrote to me from the Front and said that he went into the churches there when he could and said his prayers. He had learned the prayer I have described above, and he found that he could use it on such occasions and was helped by it. If we taught our men to pray such prayers, they would in time get accustomed to make happy and devout use of the churches at home, and the demand for open churches would become so great that few would be found locked up from Sunday to Sunday as so many unhappily are now.

8. *We must have faith when we pray.* Christ said "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (S. Matt. xxi. 22). God wants our faith, which is our trust, as the father wants the trust of his son. Partners in business must trust each other, masters and men must trust each other or things are

bound to go wrong, and we must trust in God if we are to learn to pray. If we will trust He will give us all we ask; what may seem impossible to us will be done, and even the mountains of sorrow, or temptation, or hopelessness will be cast into the sea. If only we will believe and not doubt in our hearts His power and love, He can and will do it, and we can have the faith if we will to have it. The son can believe in the father, the master can believe in his men, and much more we can believe in God, and those who do so find God is good, and that their faith which they have won by His grace brings its reward.

9. *Prayer must be explained.* People have sometimes got accustomed from childhood to repeat prayers which they could not understand, and go on saying them without attaching to them any meaning whatever. They say they are "miserable sinners," but they do not believe it; how often a dying man who has been guilty of breaking most of the Ten Commandments has told his priest that he did not think he had any sins on his conscience, since he had, as he said, "done no harm" to anyone, and had worked hard and brought up his family respectably. "O God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us miserable sinners," are words that have no reality or meaning for him. We need especially to explain the Lord's Prayer—Hallowed be Thy Name—a prayer that God may be honoured by men worshipping Him together in church: Thy Kingdom come—God's Kingdom of love and peace instead of all the present hatred, war and misery: Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven—that all may be good and happy as souls are in Heaven: Give

us this day our daily bread—food for our souls as well as food for our bodies, houses, clothes, and so on. It is a great help, after some such short explanation, then to say the Lord's Prayer slowly all together, thinking of the meaning and really *praying* each petition. So too, when using the devotion suggested above, it is well at times to explain it: for instance, when we say the words "By Thine all-prevailing Intercession in Heaven, save us and help us, O Lord!" we can recall to their remembrance our Lord in Heaven knowing and pleading for those whom we love at the Front. He knows each one, and He pleads for each one in his particular dangers and hardships, when we at home know nothing of what they are going through.

But if our people are to return again to prayer, there are yet two other things which we can do to help them.

1. *We can make our churches more homely and devotional.* Let us take the first—*homeliness.* It is possible for the very structure and arrangement of the church to express God's Welcome to His children who seek Him there, and the grateful love and joy with which they come into His Presence. In this sense the consecrated buildings of the Middle Ages possessed the character of homeliness. Then as now the love of home and the sense of beauty implanted in human nature inspired the building of each man's private house to be the nursery of all that was dearest to him. But when Christian men set themselves to build the House of God, this instinctive feeling sprang to a still loftier aim, and blossomed in the more joyous beauty

of the shrine built for Almighty God. The art that delighted to express by beauty the happiness of home in the building of the knight's castle or the yeoman's house among the fields, expressed the same happiness with enthusiasm and sacrifice in the raising of the minster or the parish church. But that tradition was discarded three hundred years ago, since when the expression of love and joy by artistic beauty has been religiously excluded from our church building. The House of Prayer must austerely avoid all suggestion of love and joy in worship. The church is no longer to be the majestical House of God, and the home of His children, but the official shelter for a public service of patience in sitting under a sermon once a week. Bare whitewashed walls and rows of benches make it look appropriately forlorn and penitential. There is no doubt that our Sunday visits through centuries to those cold white walls where everything is stiff and formal have had their chilling effect upon us. Our people have imbibed what our dreary church buildings have taught them, and we have become the most unsocial, reserved, and self-centred people in regard to religion in the world. And this is so throughout the Anglican Communion, not in England only, but also in America, South Africa, and everywhere else. Wherever we find the Anglican Church, we deplore the absence of sympathy and brotherly feeling among the members of our congregations. Everyone is content to have his own religion for himself, and feels little interest in the religion of those who Sunday after Sunday worship with him.

I believe this has come about naturally through the

studied absence of external beauty and of every token of grateful love and joy in our church building. The structure and arrangement of the House of God should sensibly express the love and devotion with which His people seek Him there. So that on entering the portal they may be impressed as Jacob was by the vision that linked earth with Heaven : "*This is none other than the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven*" ; or as the Psalmist was when he wrote : "*O how lovely are Thy dwellings, Thou Lord of Hosts.*" "*I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord.*" The place by its very structure and all its ordering should express the welcome of the Everlasting Mercy for all who enter it, so that they may feel instinctively, "God meets us here, this is Home for us."

And then our churches must teach *devotion*. The candles on the altar must speak of Him Who said "I am the Light of the World" ; the crucifix, of His Death on Calvary for our sins ; the windows filled with pictures, of that Life in which we have to follow Him ; the lamps hanging before the altar, of the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit ; the flowers, of the beauty of God. All these things are surely not to be despised, for they do help ordinary people who learn as much through their eyes as through their ears ; and if the Church is ever to be truly national again, it is of the ordinary people she must chiefly think, and not only of the few who may be highly cultured and artistic. Of course everything in the church must frequently be explained, or the decorations will come to mean nothing to many people, whose minds will only be dis-

tracted thereby instead of being led on to God. But let us remember that our lads abroad have become used to seeing sacred pictures and symbols in the churches; they have become used to the Calvary by the roadside; and they will miss them when they come home. We all know what an impression the crucifix standing everywhere has made upon them, and how they have noticed that it has often stood unhurt when all around has been destroyed by shells. How many men have asked me if I had noticed the crucifix between Fleurbaix and the trenches, unscathed, although only a few inches from it a shell had gone through the wall against which it stood!

2. *We can institute pilgrimages.* The National Mission has made the word familiar amongst us again, and we might continue to employ the idea now that the Mission is over. Instead of aimless excursions for mere pleasure, which are too often occasions of drunkenness and other sins, why should we not have pilgrimages of prayer to various churches for those who wish to join in them? A congregation might meet in their church, say their devotions aloud and together, praying for whatever might be the intention of the pilgrimage—as for instance the men at the Front, or the revival of religion, or the needs of the parish—then go out in procession, singing a litany or hymn, to meet the congregation of the next parish, go together with them again to church, pray, and go on thus to the third, according as time might allow. Tea might be served on the way, and so a happy, social, and profitable afternoon would be spent, leaving no regrets; the people would learn to love their churches, they would have their imagination stirred, be bound together in

fellowship one with another, and a witness would be given to the world that would draw others in. But if all this is to be done we must possess a simple and suitable devotion, such as all can use and understand and none can ever outgrow. St. Paul seems to have given his converts such a devotion when he taught them to "call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ," and I believe we can have just what the Apostle commends by remembering each event of our Lord's Life in order and pleading it before Him, as I have described above. That is the only way I know of which seems to-day to have much prospect of success. "The Chaplet of Prayer," which most of my time since my return from France has been spent in teaching, is founded on a devotion hundreds of years old, and I have a good hope that it will be found as helpful in the present time as in the past. I know the help it has brought to myself, and how it grows upon thousands as they learn to use it. I suggest the small picture edition with explanations (3*d*., S.P.C.K.) as the best for most people.

I have said nothing about Matins or Evensong, because I think that our people have first to acquire a spirit of devotion, which they certainly do not possess yet in general. When they have first learnt to pray by using simple prayer which they can understand and enter into, we shall discover later on how much they are capable of in public worship. Probably some simpler form of Evensong will be necessary in most parishes, with selections of psalms, and a revision of the Lectionary for Sunday use. With regard to making the Holy Communion the chief Sunday service, it will

be needful to explain that it is the only service instituted by our Lord Himself, and that it was never intended for a very select few only, but for all; that all other services are meant to lead up to it and to be a preparation for it; that it is a pleading before God, in union with our Lord in Heaven, of the One Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. This has hardly been generally grasped as yet. Our people have hardly any idea of pleading with God by what Christ has done and still does for them. They do not realise that our Lord is present with us in that service in the most intimate and gracious way possible, and that, as He gives Himself to us, He also binds us to Himself and to each other in a real and eternal bond, never to be broken unless we break it ourselves finally by deliberate and unrepented sin.

We shall have to face one great difficulty. Our service must not extend much over an hour in length. If we are going to lengthen it by gathering large numbers of communicants at the chief Sunday service, the congregations will soon be wearied and discouraged. The remedy seems to be to urge people to communicate at early services, and to come again to a later celebration to offer worship and thanksgiving for the gifts they have received. But this will again necessitate much explanation.

To sum up. We feel increasingly that this is a day of visitation, and that all depends upon whether or not our Church will be enabled to take the opportunity. I believe that it has been doing so in the National Mission and in other ways. But very much more needs to be done if, when our men come back after the war, those who

have learnt to wish for religion and to go forward are to find what they need in their Church. Certainly if we have no more to offer them than what we offer to the ordinary congregation at present, they will not find it. They will feel that they do not understand our services, that there is a lack of sympathy amongst us, that we offer such men as the majority of them are nothing that can lead them to God. I have tried to sketch out from my own experience and from what I have learnt elsewhere a true way, as I believe, of gathering such men in. I am convinced that it is consistent with the teaching of both the Bible and our Prayer-book, that it is a way in which God seems to be leading us now, and that if we go bravely and humbly forward with it, not criticising those who may be trying other experiments, but each of us trying to do our own " bit " as it may be given us, then we may indeed hope and trust for a great gathering-in.

X

THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY

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X

THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY

THE subject of this paper is important to this degree, that unless the clergy of the Church of England are better trained in the future than in the past, other measures of Church reform will be neutralised. Even in an anti-sacerdotal Church its clergy are inevitably the register of its spiritual health and wealth. A Church can hardly rise above the spiritual level of its professional representatives.

A layman should have written this paper. He, with the detached insight of a bystander, would have judged more clearly than one of their own number as to how things are with Church of England padres—that is, with the products of past theological training. But any priest at the Front can see one thing at least, namely, the truth of what has been said in the first paragraph, that with the mass of men in things religious a vast deal depends on what the parson is. It is so because with most Britishers the parson's office and functions as such are not greatly valued. They care far more about the man than his office. There is, indeed, to speak generally, among laymen a pre-

liminary aversion from the clergy, as a class, which chaplains have had to overcome. The war has seen it overcome in some measure by devotion, by gallantry, and by methods less certainly reputable, such as "holy grocery."

There is danger and strain to chaplains in this. It entangles them with themselves and with concern about their own popularity and success. On the other hand, active service has been a liberal education to them. They have been enabled in some degree to see themselves as others see them.

How do others see them? I suggest that they have found us mostly to be "good fellows," human after all, but not much else—not very understanding, not often in possession of an interesting message, not men of real craft, not genuine physicians of the soul. Perhaps they would not like it if we were. But anyhow that is what I as a parson think we are—*amateurs*. It is not enough. We have our version to learn of a war lesson which has many other applications to British institutions. Lack of training, rule of thumb, drift and makeshift will not do. They can only lead to second-best. The war has summoned us as a nation to get to first principles, to scientific understanding, and to the mastery of life which flows therefrom.

I take that lesson of the war as my starting point. But it only enforces what was evident before, that in times of change, when institutions, traditions, sanctions, and other legacies from the past pass under criticism and revision, there is no way of salvation other than that traced by living, discriminating and understanding minds. There are no short cuts. It is true of other

institutions but pre-eminently of the Church, that they must be " like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Can the Church of England be such a " disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven " ? Can she discriminate vital and main truth in her chief authority, the Bible ? Can she re-interpret and revise her Prayer-book and Articles ? Can she find a way of true religion through the quickly-growing jungle of new cults and recurring superstitions ? Only, in a great measure, if her clergy are men of clear, tested, and fearless understanding—if they are well-trained men.

It is one thing to point out these facts, but another to deal with them. To do so would need an expert educationist and accredited theologian. The writer can only make a limited contribution to the subject based on his own experience of Oxford and Cuddesdon. That experience is relevant to much of the existing arrangements for clerical training, inasmuch as a big fraction of the men who have hitherto taken Orders have passed through a university and have spent a year at a theological college like Cuddesdon.

It is necessary first to ask how present arrangements came to be, secondly to appraise their value, thirdly to suggest improvements.

(1) The Church of England as a Church has never had a thorough system of clerical training. As recently as mid-Victorian days men could enter her ministry with scarcely any special training. When the older universities were entirely (in name at any rate) Church institutions, men slipped into Orders as a gentlemanly profession on the strength of established and received

tradition. The Church as a society did not set herself either to train or to examine closely those who offered themselves for her ministry. Inherited conventions and assumptions surrounded individual members of the Church, and like a slow but strong stream carried some of them into Orders. This system, or rather absence of system, produced a minority of strong men of highly-marked individuality. A few profited by its freedom and assimilated the deposits of Christian tradition, without losing individual originality and power. The Church of England has seldom been without great men, who have arisen independently (or because) of her lack of system. She has never lacked "characters," who have picked up their own training as they might. But with the more commonplace majority, reliance on the tradition of orthodoxy prevalent in homes and universities and the absence of special and deliberate training produced a clerical standard at best human and gentlemanly, at worst worldly and unconverted, and, whether best or worst, generally conservative. It was therefore mainly to have a devout, a converted, an enterprising clergy that pious champions of revival, whether Evangelical or Tractarian, founded post-graduate theological colleges (such as Cuddesdon). A year was enough for this spiritual deepening and instruction. The main foundations of the Christian religion were solid and not in question. Social and economic problems did not appear to be related to moral and spiritual. The point was to establish schools of earnest devotion and pastoral zeal.

(2) These one-year colleges have in the main succeeded in the aim of their founders, if that aim has been

correctly described. That there are a great number of devoted priests in parishes at home and in the mission field is due in a large measure to these colleges. If keenness, loyalty, and activity were all that is required of the priesthood, the present colleges know how to supply the demand. Parishes, especially in towns, are commonly hives of earnest and vigorous organisation. As such they witness to the resurrection of the Church of England from her eighteenth-century death-in-life. They have acted as a leaven on the whole life of England. They have made great contributions of splendid Christian men to Britain-in-arms. Further, these colleges have generally enshrined themselves in the hearts of their members, as the means, in the hands of saintly teachers and friends, whereby they have been "blessed with spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ." Academic and outside critics are apt to neglect or ignore the spiritual debt which men owe—say to Cuddesdon. As one of her sons, I am proud to aver that she represents treasuries of spiritual riches which it would be criminal to dissipate.

And yet for all their success and excellence these colleges are open to the charge of failure. In these days more than energy and spirituality is required of the ministry. Along with devotion there must be understanding of the world and its needs, understanding of the Gospel which can satisfy the needs. There is great danger to-day in the exaltation of religious devotion and activity over love of the truth. During the last sixty years so much of the best and most intense achievements, whether Evangelical or Catholic, have been reared on a basis of reactionary thought.

The great figures in the modern parochial calendar have frequently been impatient of liberal thinking. And by contrast with them the protagonists of enlightenment, whether in theology or social affairs, have often appeared to be academic, spiritually inept, and unpossessed of a message for plain folk.

There is, in truth, a great pressure upon men in the active ministry to harden them against thinking and to drive them to be devoted primarily to what is efficient in catching and attaching the souls of men. It may be called the pressure of parochial pragmatism. It tells in the direction of championing and assuming as healthy anything in religious method which arrests, warms, comforts or pleases the human heart. This is full of perils of which men absorbed in busy activity are apt to be oblivious. Religion to-day is a very queer thing. It grows strange cults as fertile soil grows weeds. If a Christian priest devotes himself exclusively to what is religiously satisfying he will, without knowing it, allow unhealthy growths to take root in the garden of the soul. Liability to morbid development is inherent in "religiosity." That is why intellectual and moral candour is the saving complement to religious devotion. Intellectual honesty is meant to be the great antiseptic in religion. Therefore, to repeat, along with devotion, there must go open-minded understanding. And it is in the equipment of men in capacity for understanding that the present theological colleges are open to the charge of failure.

The reason for the failure is complex, and the blame is by no means to be laid solely at the door of theological colleges. British intolerance of thinking, discomfort

in the presence of living ideas, evasion of facts, and suspicion of theory are *participes criminis*, together with the limitations of school and university education. Yet none but very blind partisans of theological colleges can merely waive the charge which laymen bring from far and near, that the colleges help to manufacture men whose minds are prone to prejudice, soon arrested in growth, and feebly exercised in the understanding of the world around them. There is truth in the judgment that the theological colleges help to make "parsons" of men at the expense of their humanity and naturalness, and to produce the mind which is clerical and yet not truly professional. In a word, the colleges represent a process of half-baking.

The last word of the preceding paragraph indicates the main reason for the failure which is fairly to be ascribed to the colleges. They are attempting the impossible in point of time. It is certain that to-day, no matter how things were formerly, the average candidate does not arrive at a theological college so impregnated by prevalent Christian tradition that he only needs a year's further devotional and religious training to be ready for ordination. If he does so, he is normally in urgent need of being challenged to examine that which hitherto he has accepted on authority. In other words, a theological college cannot in most cases rely on the results of earlier training and thought, but has itself to tackle the bulk of the task of making a man—so far as training can do so—into an understanding priest. That is what the principals of theological colleges have been trying to do. They are not at all unaware of the intellectual

needs of the time. But they are attempting the impossible. For the normal course is only a year long. It is fatally too short. Not too short to prepare for the Bishop's examination, not much too short for devotional discipline, but fatally too short for thorough mental development.

For few candidates for the ministry, when they go to a theological college, have thought much about the Christian religion or about current criticisms of it. Very often they are sound, well-intentioned athletic members of clerical families. Some have not read for honours, but are pass men with little belief in their own ability to think. Some have acquired but a slight capacity for reading big books. They are commonly very young for their years with that extended youthfulness which is a by-product of English school and university life. Many have seen very little of the world.

To such men the theological college is at first a rather disagreeable means of teaching them discipline and habits of devotion. It expects, if it does not require, that much time be given to services. It is throughout a purveyor of lectures. It is, ere its course is half way over, overshadowed by the prospect of a Bishop's examination, for the safe passing of which there are frequently insistent economic reasons. The examination is one which makes recourse to "little books" a powerful temptation. A man's interest becomes concentrated on that which counts for examination purposes. And on the other side of the Bishop's examination there lies, more often than not, the intricate machinery of parochial activity to catch the newly-ordained man in its wheels.

There is real educational vice in all this. It means that men go into the ministry with congested minds, having heard of a number of questions which they have not examined for themselves. It means that their minds little resemble that of a good physician—the mind which has learnt from authority and has assimilated tradition, which goes out to apply its understood science to life and to get it enriched thereby—the diagnosing, acquiring, ever-growing mind. It is capacity to understand and to learn from experience which we clergy lack. That is why we are dull. Training cannot and ought not to provide answers to all possible questions, but it fails if it does not exercise and develop a capacity for facing and for working a way through the questions and problems which experience will raise.

This is the failure of present theological colleges. Their training of men who have to minister to a restless and ever-increasingly critical world is on the intellectual side a half—even a quarter—training. It means that men go out into the ministry, as it were, loaded with cargo not properly stowed. They are no longer laymen, yet they are not fully priests. They are "odd fish," self-conscious and uneasy, committed to that which they do not fully understand. Lay suspicions of theological colleges as the means of stamping men with clericalism are not altogether beside the mark. It is hardly too much to say that the minimum character of training at theological colleges creates a maximum separation between clergy and laity. For there is time at theological colleges to contract clerical diseases but not time to get over them.

Of course there is much to qualify these generalisations. Some men survive the training with their native powers of understanding and common sense unimpaired. Some have the good fortune to serve under vicars who stimulate their minds and help them to learn from life and from books. Some go on after ordination to read the books which lecturers at college alluded to in the hope that men would read them in after days. Some are constituted so that they are meant to be independent of training, and are fitted to exercise undisturbedly a ministry of love.

Perhaps with the majority all goes fairly well in their ministry so long as they are young and eager. But for many, whose powers of assimilation have not been developed, there await middle-aged bafflement and disillusion. They get tired of knocking at doors which they cannot unlock. They become men who have "stopped." This is especially disastrous to-day, for the world does not "stop." It persists in movement. Hence the tension between modern thought and many professional representatives of Christianity. It leads to clerical fearfulness and reaction. A man in taking Orders becomes representative of a great inherited ecclesiastical and theological system, about which, as education spreads, the mind of the world grows more and more critical. The seas upon which he has offered to help sail the old ecclesiastical ark seem to be in an uproar. If, in pre-ordination days, he has not faced the weather nor been out on the deep waters, he will frequently not get out of harbour ever after. Dreadful instances of foundering will daunt him. He will become weather-bound.

(3) What is the remedy ?

The finding of an answer will partly depend on a general improvement in national education. Why should men leave schools and colleges so ill-educated ? What theological colleges fail to do British education fails to do. It fails to train the mind. It abounds too much in lectures "taken down" and "got up," in little books and trivial examinations. Avenues of discussion open up here which this paper must leave on one side. But the finding of a remedy will depend more immediately on what can be done (*a*) at the universities (perhaps especially at the older universities) and (*b*) at the existing theological colleges.

(*a*) The universities.

Universities can act as theological schools. They have—some of the newer universities are developing—theological faculties. A man can take his degree in theology. This raises the question whether it is not better for a man to have his mind trained on a non-theological subject as an undergraduate, and to go on to theology as a graduate, rather than specialise on theology at once. I have heard arguments both ways, but I suppose that it will be generally agreed[1] that non-theological education should come first and theology second. At any rate, there are two ways in which universities can help in theological training ; (1) by providing an undergraduate course for a degree : (2) by providing a graduate course.

As regards both courses, it is a misfortune that

[1] Here I can hear the protesting voice of the man in the Church of England who is perhaps most worthy to be called a great educationist—Fr. Herbert Kelly, S.S.M.

certainly at Oxford, and I think too at Cambridge, the theological faculty and school are relatively so much occupied with questions of Biblical criticism, so little with metaphysical and moral philosophy. At Oxford a wealth of training in the handling of great philosophical questions—which is what a man who is intending to take Orders most wants—is largely confined to the "Greats" school, and is there much "wired round" by classical requirements.

Yet these and other difficulties should not deter from action those who believe that the university is the proper place for theological training, if it is to be in touch with contemporary thought. There is the Scottish Presbyterian example in favour of their opinion. I will only say here that it will be essential to the effective development of post-graduate training at universities that men should be gathered into a common devotional life in hostels under the personal inspiration of a spiritual master. For they need to be spiritually won and morally disciplined. Otherwise mentally they will weary of apparently academic discussions, and morally they will fail to cut themselves free from the failures of their undergraduate days. The protagonists of theological training at universities are deluded if they think they can dispense with conversion as an integral part of preparation for the ministry. It is hard to be converted at the university.

(*b*) The existing theological colleges.

The last thing is to despair of these colleges. What they need, and what those who are concerned with them have been for long demanding, is *more time*. They have in them a power of winning a man's whole

being to a personal allegiance to our Lord which is hardly to be found elsewhere. Now this is vital to the theological training of Englishmen. For in many Englishmen intellectual interest is only aroused and maintained by the touching of his heart and the bracing of his will. To think deeply and painfully is uncongenial to him, and unless he is stimulated and disciplined he will not do it.[1]

If there were more time, say at Cuddesdon or Wells, the two elements of devotion and inquiry, which at present are nearly crushed by pressure of time into antagonism, would balance and fertilise one another. Nowhere else, I believe, could there be a freer and more energetic exchange of views than within the common family life of such colleges, of which the size is too small for cliques and yet is large enough to be heterogeneous.

If there were more time at these colleges the lectures could give way largely to personal teaching—to what is known as the "tutorial system." It is the personal teaching of individuals, in which the pupil does not take down other men's views in lecture notes but is thrown

[1] Compare some words of Charles Lister about Julian Grenfell :— "I don't suppose many people know of the ardent love he had for honesty of purpose and intellectual honesty, and what sacrifices he made for them, and sacrifices of peace of mind abhorrent to most Englishmen. The Englishman is a base seeker after happiness, and he will make most sacrifices of principle and admit any number of lies into his soul to secure this dear object of his. It is want of courage on its negative side, this quality—and swinish greed on its positive side. Julian, in his search for truth and in his search for what he believed to be his true self, caused himself no end of worry and unhappiness, and was a martyr who lit his own fires with unflinching nerve." (Charles Lister : Letters and Recollections, p. 187.)

by the tutor upon the task of working out his own conclusions, which is the educational secret of the older universities, perhaps of Oxford in particular. Nowhere should this be so fruitful a method as in theological colleges, just because there is in them what is lacking on the nearly uncharted seas of modern philosophical speculation, namely, a main compass bearing of received orthodoxy by which the individual can navigate. Theological colleges, indeed, with their corporate life and spiritual atmosphere, should be family circles in which young sons are free—as they are in a good home —for the widest and not yet responsible development. They should provide the sustaining environment of Mother Church within which her boys can adventure themselves, and experiment and doubt and stand away from acceptances and get mentally fogged and fight their way through to first-hand understanding and allegiance.

Further, the tutorial system makes discrimination among individuals possible. "There are diversities of gifts but the same spirit; and there are diversities of ministrations and the same Lord." This great law of nature and of grace is disregarded by the pressing of all kinds of men into the same short lecture system. It is the essence of tutorial teaching to find out individual capabilities and leanings, and to develop men according to their several gifts. It is wrong and impossible to turn men into one mould, or to make all conform to one ideal of what the fully-trained man should be. The ideal should be there, but only individual discrimination can decide how to bring this man and that near to it. There will always be some to whom

philosophy and theology and " questions " are barred, who yet are capable in other ways, whether practically or mystically, or lovingly, and are as vital to the Church as the intellectualists.

Time then is required. That is the main burden of this brief paper. Not necessarily the same time of training for all. That must vary in accordance with the previous development of individuals. Three years are needed for most men, for none less than two. Given time, sympathetic open-minded teachers, and the removal of the spectre of examination from the horizon—at any rate during the greater part of the course—and wonders may be wrought.

But time means money. Nothing effective will be done in the reform of theological education until the Church as a Church grapples with its financial aspect. At present training is mostly at individual charges at the end of a costly school and university career. It is the sense in young men that, after costing their parents so much, they must be earning their own living which helps to hurry them into the ministry before they are properly trained.

Finance is the key to the whole training problem. It alone can secure a condition which has hardly been mentioned in this paper and yet is as important to a man who is to be a priest as intellectual and spiritual culture, namely, *knowledge of life and of men.* It is not only that theological courses should be longer, but in many cases they should be begun later, and, if begun earlier, should be capable of interruption.

Effective provision is urgently needed against the passing of an unformed boy of 22, with no knowledge

of life, straight from school and university to a theological college and thence into the ministry. He is in danger of being blinkered all his life. He needs to be a real layman before he is a parson. The average age of entry into the ministry should be raised. Principals of theological colleges would not dispute this. They try to postpone the premature arrival of students. They are anxious to advise men to gain experience in some other profession before taking Orders. But nearly always the difficulty is money.

Finance is the *sine quâ non* of tutorial teaching. Larger staffs will be required. For where one competent man can try to teach by means of lectures, it will need three to do individual tuition.

Financial provision, again, is a necessity if the ministry of the Church of England in the future is to be less of a one class and well-to-do character. At present the cost of getting ordained is prohibitive to men "in the ranks"—to the kind of men who in this war have astonished the world.

Finance, lastly, will be decisive in the matter of training for clergy *after ordination*. After all the priest is like the engineer. He has to learn his job not only at college but at the works. Many Britishers will never learn much from books, but only from human documents and practical experiment. To many the study of psychology or the science of teaching, or moral theology or sociology, will appear abstract and theoretical, until their interest in those subjects has been aroused concretely by experience and action. Men will learn as they go. But this will mean a lengthened diaconate, the maintenance of training

and study centres in dioceses, and the provision of ways and means for a return of some men from parishes for further study at the university and at theological colleges. The Church of England has hardly begun to think of developing a real science in things spiritual. She is an amateur body. But the science that is needed must not be left only to professors. It cannot be merely an affair of books. The lessons of pastoral experience and the theories of "the schools" are necessarily mutual factors in the development of a true science for the Christian ministry. But in this as in other things finance will be decisive.

So far this paper might almost have been written before the war. But the war is creating a new situation which has to be faced. The supply of candidates for ordination has run nearly dry, because it has been diverted into the Services. Many of the men who had set their faces towards the ministry are numbered amongst those who have given their lives for their country and her cause. Clearly the fortunes of the Church after the war are going to be vitally bound up with the passing into her ministry of men who have borne arms. If they come from all ranks they will constitute an epoch in the history of a Church which has hitherto had but a mainly "upper-class" ministry. The first thing is to get the men. Something has already been done to that end. The Archbishops have put a letter into the hands of chaplains to the Forces inviting officers and men to consider the claims of the ministry and assuring them of the intention of the Church to see them through the necessary training.

How are these men, with "the smell of fire" on them, to be trained? I find it harder to prophesy on this problem than to write about past experience. At any rate, if the principles underlying the above suggestions for the reform of theological training are sound, they will admit of application to the special circumstances which will arise after the war.

Much will depend on the frame of mind in which men lay down their arms. That is difficult to forecast. Our thoughts on this subject are bound to be fathered by our wishes. Visions arise of a great band of men arising to reinforce the ranks of the ministry—men of tested and grateful faith, graduates in a school of grim reality, experts in knowledge of human nature, seasoned in self-sacrifice, experienced in fellowship, converts to discipline. What might they not do for the cause of Christ could they but bring these qualities unimpaired as equipment for a ministry in His name. They might be a bridge over the gulf of misunderstanding which divides clergy from laity. They might be fresh means of communication with their old comrades in all walks of life.

But there is another side. If they will have learnt much in war, they will also have much to unlearn and forget. They will probably be restless and in reaction from discipline. Some of them will lack initiative and independence through having had so much done for them in the Army. Many will have suffered from mental and moral relaxation. In general cultivation, it is hardly too much to say, they will be almost barbarians. They will need thorough and rigorous training.

The task of training them will be bigger than can be compassed by theological colleges alone. It will call for the help of Whitehall, of universities both old and new, of the Workers' Educational Association of the leaders of Labour. There should be in these quarters a wealth of good will ready to co-operate in seizing the educational opportunity which the end of the war will bring.

The special part which falls to the Church is to see that, as regards the work to which she calls men and the demands she makes on those who offer to do it, hers is no "soft option," but a high enterprise hard of achievement. She must see that the conditions of life during the training of men for her ministry are unspoiling and simple. She must be ready to absolve men from the knowledge of Greek and of Latin. She must spare them the insincerity of being concerned with the Thirty-nine Articles. Her chief aim must be to admit them by sound educational method into a thorough and enlightened understanding of the Bible. She must set herself with their aid to give utterance in word and in life to that wonderful Gospel of the Kingdom, which is both the discovery of a century's study of the Bible and the main need of a war-ravaged world.

XI

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY

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XI

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF THE CLERGY

A DISCUSSION of Religious Education in England to-day may fairly start with the assumption that something is wrong with it—something, that is to say, over and above obvious defects or omissions which were commonplaces long before the searchlights of war displayed the whole nakedness of the land. The beaten tracks of those criticisms and controversies of the past are unknown to me; they may or may not intersect the line of construction or development which seems obvious now. But the urgent and immediate need of drastic reform may perhaps excuse the ignorant for rushing in with such ideas as they have.

The opportunity of association with the Englishman, the man in the street, 'Jones,'—or what you will—which the war has afforded to army chaplains have revealed to those who did not know it before an absence of religious education, not merely deficiencies in its method. These two are really one and the same; the one and only fault in our religious education is that it

is not religious education. It is true that we give what is called religious education in our Sunday schools,[1] but though we may teach in them we certainly do not educate, and even what we teach is nothing much like the Christian religion. In so speaking we are not taking into account the instruction given in the home, for that, after all, varies so much that it cannot supply a basis for any broad generalisation.

Our religious instruction, then, does not educate in religion because it is based on no assumption that religion is a thing which concerns the child's intelligence. As a child is taught—(and 'taught' only means 'told')—that Jamaica is or is not of importance because figs are or are not grown there, so he is taught or told that there are ten plagues or eleven tribes and that David and Timothy were both "good men." Such facts may or may not be true as Jewish history, but they have no more a place in religious education than could be found for Jamaican fig-growing in "Ruff's Guide" or "Bradshaw." Nor is the child—perhaps fortunately enough—called upon to think of these things, but only to remember them. Should he start thinking he might indeed select David as his ideal with results disastrous to himself, and might come to other conclusions about religion which, fortunately, the complete suppression of his intelligence on the subject causes to be smothered away. If perchance he struggle to escape from the folds of this stifling process and dare ask of his teacher such questions as "Who made God?" or—having been 'paraded' for church on Sunday—

[1] The whole question of religious education in elementary day schools is, for various reasons, omitted in this Essay.

"If Solomon was really a wise man why did he have hundreds of wives?" are his inquiries taken as opportunities for 'educating' him? Are the motions of that wonderful masterpiece of God's creation—the human mind—towards intelligence greeted with delight? Is he encouraged to believe that he is doing just what God meant him to do—employ his mind on the most important subject in the whole universe, the Nature and Character of God Himself? Is he led reverently and honestly towards such beginnings as he can appreciate of a proper understanding of his religion? Generally not. "That is not in the lesson." "You must never question anything in the Bible." "Hush, Charlie! You mustn't be irreverent." "Little boys can't understand these things; wait till you get older." All of which answers being interpreted read thus to him ten years later (if he remember them so long):

"That is not in the lesson" = "I am not here to answer that kind of question. I know very little about God and know no way of answering you; but you must not realise this, for then you might get puzzled about religion or, much worse, lose confidence in me as a teacher."

"You must never question anything in the Bible" = "The rational safeguards of religion are so flimsy that you must never lean on them."

"Hush, Charlie! You mustn't be irreverent" = "Don't set such a bad example of misguided intelligence. You should always retain a large reserve of stupidity for dealing with holy things."

"Little boys can't understand these things; wait till you get older" = "Wait till you get older and then

you will have to ask someone else, so I shan't come into it any way."

The time of Confirmation might be supposed to remedy previous defects in religious education, but there are reasons why in most cases it does not do so. The profound unaffected thoughtfulness of childhood has passed ; the boy mind has seized upon a thousand interests ; adolescence stirs the body to restlessness. Self-conscious, he will not ask questions at a class of his school or play fellows. He comes under compulsion, parental or otherwise ; he generally wants "to be done," it is true, but chiefly because it is "the thing," and though the classes are a bore he does not wish to be peculiar. If he is independent enough to assert his dislike of the whole proceedings he will not often escape ; coercion or the unsuccessful attempt at it will often set him in an attitude of antagonism towards religion and parsons for life. It is not wholly a cause for regret that there is such a large leakage between Sunday school and Confirmation class. Many an army chaplain has had cause to be thankful for the countless opportunities presented by the presence of large numbers of unconfirmed men in his charge. For Confirmation is, as it were, the last excuse that our Church has—to use a horrible phrase—for "getting hold of a man" ; that excuse generally passes at the age of fourteen ; if a boy is confirmed by that age and does not then gain some sort of mental appreciation of the scheme and fabric of the Christian religion, the chances are that he never will. And who can expect him to do so at that age ? The curate himself only guarantees that he knows the Catechism ; he may,

of course, be interested in it and even in a certain way understand it, but knowing in this connection need only mean cramming like a French verb and repeating by heart ; so much additional school-work, in fact. The whole Catechism, indeed, worded as it is, is another fair instance of the lack of any attempt at education. It is the only authoritative instruction in the faith, yet its language is difficult enough to render it for all practical purposes useless unless the memory can retain not only the verbal repetition but the explanations given in Confirmation classes years before. The answer to the second question on the Sacraments is to laymen a monument of intricate unintelligibility. If we are to have a manual of religious instruction at all it should be verbally and constructively intelligible and based on scientific lines. I cannot do this ; I am not an educationist or a trained teacher ; but I know that it can be done, and I should recognise at once the finished article. It would not in the least matter—rather the reverse—if the whole manual and the individual questions were too long to be committed to memory.

Our real difficulty about Confirmation is this : we believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands is vitally necessary to strengthen and uplift at as early an age as possible ; the standard of intelligence demanded by the Prayer-book or indeed by the requirements of the situation itself is not high ; it may well be that most of our boys understand quite enough to make them fit to receive the grace of Confirmation. But it is not, and cannot be, that understanding of the Christian Faith which is the proper equipment of a man of God in a pagan world. Yet the

Church as it works at present can never remedy this, once Confirmation has taken place. It can exhort attendance at Bible class; it may preach "Read, read, read," but it has lost its opportunity. The clergy cannot—only because they dare not—give away their own organisation and say to a man twenty, thirty, or forty years of age, "Your mind is full of wrong conceptions as to the Christian religion and the Christian life; it is our fault, not yours. But I must ask you to conform to one of the many Prayer-book rubrics which we habitually disobey and give me notice of your intention to make your Communion on Easter Day. I shall then not administer the Sacrament to you unless you give me the opportunity of explaining to you that which through the Church's fault you have never understood or been allowed to forget, and of helping you to discover or rediscover what Christ is to YOU. This Easter we do not want our offertories swollen and our chancels filled by men who—many of them—do not believe in God except in the vaguest possible way and whose idea of Christianity is frankly Gilbertian."[1]

Thus the weakness of the Church of England lies, not in the large number of nominally Church of England men who are unconfirmed, but in the larger number of men who, being confirmed, have no religious education worthy of the name.

Before passing from this slight and therefore unfairly

[1] Even supposing such an attitude to be possible, the suggestion begs the whole question as to the ability or otherwise of the individual clergy of our Church to do for the man all that such a proposal would involve.

incomplete examination of 'religious education,' so called, to review the effect on mind and character of the grown man, let us consider briefly the similarity of the defects in the training of the upper classes of boyhood. The parents insist on the prominent advertisement of religion in the prospectuses of the schools to which they send their boys. The high fee demanded leaves them satisfied with a course which includes sausages on Sunday, a gymnasium, a tiled swimming-bath, "Scripture," and a school chapel with a D.D. or B.D. attached as chaplain, or preferably as French or science master with chaplain's work thrown in. Thus they delegate the most important and most difficult of parental responsibilities to paid—often underpaid—strangers; nor in so doing have they the excuses of the working-classes. They could make the time; they have the necessary general education to fit them for the task; books and teachers are within easy access.[1] But religion becomes a closed book at home; natural reserve on the boy's side, ignorance, unthinking belief in the perfection of the public school system on the parents' side combine to prevent them ever discussing the two things that make the boy's very life—his body and his spirit. And yet often enough father and mother want the boy to be "good" and are overjoyed when he gets top in the Scripture exam.; they little know that all that that breathless fact indicates is that Harold has drawn a perfectly exact and most beautifully neat map of St. Paul's missionary journeys, not omitting to mark the drainage system and mountain ranges of Southern Europe, and has, by

[1] Books certainly; teachers not always, but of them more later.

a feat of mental gymnastic worthy of a better cause, succeeded in disentangling the career of Jehoshaphat from that of Ahab. Meanwhile compulsory school chapel—often either wickedly dreary or unintelligibly over-elaborate—engenders either a distaste for religious observances or at any rate an undesirable familiarity with them and a wearied sense of formality in attending them. This brings us to another weakness in our system of presenting religion, and it results in a misconception which affects all classes alike. We encourage or at any rate allow the idea that the be-all and end-all of religion is to "come to church." By the time a boy leaves Sunday school or public school this is thoroughly ingrained. The view generally presented to him of church attendance and Communion would lead one to suppose that he is in Standard VI, whereas in reality we have never got him past Standard I. Our Matins and Liturgy must have been purposed for worshippers with greater religious understanding and devotional capacity than the average layman as the Church of England turns him out. In the majority of cases he cannot live up to this Standard VI form of worship, and one of two things happens. Either he doesn't notice or realise that this is so, and is content with an outward unthinking formality culminating in a sidesmanship; or he reacts from it, recognising that it is "too much of a good thing for him," hollow, dreary, meaningless, and leaves our churches half empty accordingly.

Lastly, the commonest word in a boy's training is 'Don't,' and his religious training is nearly all 'Don'ts.' In a majority of cases he never unlearns this negative

view of religion, which is Jewish in its origin rather than Christian. Often enough a man's positive virtues are directly due to Christian influences, but he has not learned to recognise them as Christ-like.

Whether or not the truly magnificent soldier whom we honour is a production or accident of this system I do not propose to discuss. But let us examine the proofs in the man of the flaws in the boy's training. He believes just a very few things about God, but could give no reason for the faith that is in him. The children of this world are indeed wiser than the children of light; no average professing once-a-year-communicant member of the Church of England could hold his own for five minutes against any average mildly intelligent—not even intellectual—agnostic. The unbeliever always knows better what he disbelieves, and why, than the believer knows why he has any faith, what good it is to him or anyone else, or even what it means. And this is only to be expected. Disbelief has the monopoly of thought in the average man. When he starts seriously thinking, as few men in any class fail some time or other to do, he begins with the assumption that the Christian side of the question has already been put. Did he not go to Sunday school? Of course he did—he won a Scripture prize. Sermons? Why! he must have heard hundreds in his choir days or his school chapel. He was confirmed after many classes. Yes, it's only fair to give the other side a chance now. He attends an open-air meeting, reads a book, joins in a discussion, or whatever it is that stirs his mind. He hears criticisms—so easy and obvious—of the Church and cannot reply; he hears elementary

objections to Christianity to which his religious education has supplied him with no answer. He assumes that there *is* no reply. His own growing experience of life as it really is, of men and things—not necessarily alone under war conditions—sheds a blaze of absurdity, or at any rate of unlikelihood, on to what he has been taught. His common-sense rebels, as very well it may. Even if he cares enough, if home or some other personal influence keep alive a passion for righteousness or a mystic temperament refuses to abandon a sense of the unseen, he just clings to certain fundamentals and refuses to think things out. Such a course may satisfy himself, but it is a source of great weakness to the Church. He dares not think, he must avoid discussion; often enough he cannot even disclose himself to be a believer, having no guns to defend his position. And in the case where a man just ceases to believe at all he is as often as not quite honest about it and proud of so being. He thinks that he has given a judicial verdict on sufficient evidence and does not realise that the counsel for the defence has never been allowed to state a case at all. He goes in search of some other philosophy of life which affects to enlist the intelligence and is willing, at any rate, to explain itself—or, more often, he simply does without.

I am well aware that this Essay up to this point is fiercely indifferent to much that may be said on the other side and ignores many exceptions to the statements contained in it. But the general position is such that exaggeration—where it can be fairly so named—may be excused if it serves to emphasise our main failures as they affect large numbers of baptised and

professing Christians. And the remedies ? The first surely is to observe the most elementary rule of education—that nothing should be for any reason taught by the teacher which later must be unlearnt by the pupil. Is the Old Testament of the same value and importance to us as the New Testament ? Is the chief Christian motive fear of hell or punishment ? Does virtue pay ? If we agree, as agree we must, that our religion is based on the New Testament, that the Hell-fire Gospel offers to many a selfish motive, that uncompromising virtue does not necessarily bring in this world its own reward, we have no business ever to let any child receive a wrong impression on such subjects. This need not involve us in any controversy as to the verbal inspiration of the Bible, though it would be well for the Church of England to hold one opinion and to utter one authoritative voice on that and many other subjects. But let that pass. Let us suppose that we are all agreed to accept the literal historical accuracy, say, of the book of Jonah. Is the 'fact' of that prophet's consumption by a whale of the same importance as the fact that Christ was truly Man yet sinned not ? If not, why, in pity's name, should we give that impression to nine out of every ten children who ever attend our churches or schools ? I speak without much experience of the process ; I could not here and now produce my evidence. But I see the results. The results are a suspicion of the New Testament because of the Old, or an adoption of the New Testament to the entire exclusion of the Old as being too trivial. The *facts* of Biblical or Jewish history are so persistently pushed into the child-mind as religious

verities of the supremest importance that he cannot see the wood for the trees. Where we do try to draw a moral from Old Testament history it is always the kind of lesson that pictures God as the policeman round the corner, whereas nearly every page of the Old Testament, including the book of Jonah, contains infinitely more accurate and more useful information than that. As childhood passes into boyhood the same method continues. The child has to unlearn the negative presentation of Christianity; he has to forget, if he can, that "churchgoing" is neither the beginning nor the end of the Christian life, though the Church itself functions at either end of human life. The instances may not be well chosen, but there are countless things which boys and girls learn about religion, in hymns, in Sunday school, in sermons, in books, in impressions, which some day must be unlearnt if ever they are to be earnest, intelligent Christians. To unlearn what has been taught when we were young, to readjust ideas, to adapt simple and early instruction to later experience of life, must, under the best circumstances, be a delicate and difficult operation. But with us it is an operation which has to be performed unaided; human frailty in the face of temptation, the strength of outward things, and "the wisdom of the children of this world" settle the rest.

And next? Certain truths must be taught with a right proportion of emphasis, and nothing must ever be taught that needs violent readjustment. With this end in view we require an authoritative manual of instruction (not only on Church doctrine) as a supplement to, or alternative for, the Church Catechism.

Well and good. But there must be an attempt—outside and beyond this—to educate rather than to teach. Take Prayer as a typical illustration; we are all *taught* prayers. Many an officer's sole petitions are the Lord's Prayer and something almost as out of tune with his present life as

> Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
> Look on me, a little child—

and so forth. It is not his fault that his training in prayer was always to learn by heart children's prayers, boys' prayers, collects and so forth as "vain repetitions." Seldom was he trained to reach out towards God and express himself to God in his own words, or to watch for God; he does not know how to pray—"Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Prayer is represented to his mind as a kind of automatic machine which may or may not work for his benefit. The explanation of the Lord's Prayer as given in the Catechism lays a quite disproportionate stress on the personal advantages for self and friends to be secured through the act of praying. The three primary devotions "Hallowed be THY Name, THY Kingdom come, THY Will be done," receive no intelligent emphasis in the answer to the question "What desirest thou of God in this prayer?" And no reference whatever is made in it to the condition attaching to our request for forgiveness.

So much and much more is needed in many directions. Sketchy must be any criticisms that omit a reference to the fundamental flaw, and suggestions must be indefinite that do not urge the one improvement necessary as the source of all others.

The weakness of religious education in our country is the weakness of us, the clergy. There is no fault in it which ultimately cannot justly be laid at our door. If Sunday-school teachers with all their devotion and self-sacrifice are fruitless in their efforts, it is we who trained them so or never noticed that they were not trained better. If sermons, whether to children or adults, if addresses at Bible or Confirmation class, have been ineffective, they were ours. We have access to the homes, we have a fair field in the public schools and universities, we have privileged opportunities with individuals; the product too is ours. *Deus misereatur*. We shall be told that we are not nearly near enough to being saints ourselves; that even we talk and organise too much and pray too little; that we do not put our trust in and stir up the Spirit of God Who is in us; and it is all true. We shall be told, and rightly, that our theology is weak and our course of study and preparation laughably insufficient in length compared with that of the Roman Catholic priest or the minister of most of the denominations. But I would direct attention to the fatal weakness of our training mentally and psychologically, leaving to others the discussion of the spiritual or theological aspect. And in such criticism as I make I must be understood still to speak quite generally. The limits of space imposed upon me do not allow of a recital of exceptions and qualifications.

(i) We are, or are supposed to be, the chosen exponents of Revealed Truth, and as such to teach it and to preach it in the world, yet we ourselves do not receive proper instruction in teaching or preaching.

If we do not train our Sunday-school teachers in the elements of educational method and they are therefore bad teachers, it is because we do not ourselves know. We may in course of years learn how to present knowledge to the child-mind and how best to provoke the young to think for themselves, how best to train, but we could have been told a great deal about this before ever we started. We were not told. We were put to practise no doubt in a Sunday school as laymen and were given the subject-matter of the lesson carefully arranged under headings, but of educational method we were left wholly ignorant. We thought that we "had a way" with children and that that was enough. The local Sunday school to us as laymen was as the laboratory to the would-be man of science; but no student of science will become a chemist by the mere fact of visiting a laboratory and reading the names on the bottles. He must be told also the various combinations of chemicals, the action and reaction of one on the other, the proportion required, the adjustment of weights, in order that he may know how to handle the material at his disposal. We have, as teachers, the material, the facts, the superficial knowledge, but we are not trained to manipulate.

Nor are we instructed how to preach. We present three sermons on approbation and they are mildly criticised by an examining chaplain. Any man of ordinary education, priest or layman, could in the course of his life preach one or two sermons which would fairly pass any examining chaplain. It is no test, nor is it seriously contemplated by the Ordination candidate as such. Of course he wants to make the

best impression possible, but the sermon-test is never presented to him by those in authority as a serious part of his examination for Holy Orders, and he is allowed to take for granted that of course he will be "licensed to preach." There is another form of reliability trial; the candidate delivers himself on a Sunday in church before the staff and students of his theological college; and on the lawn or in the common room afterwards they pull the sermon to pieces for him. Its orthodoxy is thereby insured, its theology is corrected, and a friendly battle may be waged as to whether or not it is sound from a "Kartholic" point of view, or (in another type of college) "a bit dangerous" from an ultra-Protestant point of view. But, valuable as some such criticisms may be, it is simply comic to confine the critics to a band of young embryo-clerics in the close atmosphere of a theological college. Our life's work is to make our message intelligible, not to university men particularly interested in our own specialised work, but to the world at large.

(ii) We are, or are supposed to be, the defenders and explainers of the Christian Faith; we are regarded as—indeed, tacitly claim to be—the experts. We have courses of lectures delivered to us on the heresies of the Early Church, yet no one troubles to bring those heresies into relation with modern thought or to tell us that the man in the street reads, not Arius, but Bernard Shaw. Ten minutes' digression with an apology in the middle of an hour's lecture suffices to dispose of Christian Science. Spiritualism is perhaps not so much as mentioned—save in answer to a question. We may have done much on our own initiative to read the

Moderns, but as far as our training goes we are not encouraged to study them nor equipped to meet them. Small wonder that the Gospel we deliver to others in school or class or church seems to ignore and belittle, or at any rate seldom to satisfy, modern doubt.

(iii) In this same connection we lack yet more. We may obtain a fair pass-mark in our set-book, "Moberly on the Atonement"; we may produce an excellent test-sermon on the same subject—a sermon well balanced, orthodox, theologically correct. But no one has ever troubled to find out what answer, if any —worded in intelligible and non-theological language— we could give, for example, to a member of the Workmen's Educational Association who blurted out to us in conversation some such remark as this: "A great deal in Christ's teaching appeals to me, but I can't tolerate the idea of someone else being punished for my sins, nor understand why God should forgive me because Jesus died on the Cross." Our training would provide us, no doubt, with the ability to preach quite a decent and utterly wearisome sermon on the subject two Sundays later; but what we need and what we lack is the understanding that the problem —though of general interest—is wholly individual in a unique way to the particular man who is speaking to us. If true followers of Christ's method and example, we are messengers to the individual rather than to the mass. Yet we are given no training in dealing with individuals. Our apologetics, as far as we have any, are negative and general rather than positive and particular. I mean, we are invited to examine objections to Christianity and are pointed to the answer with

the implication that such knowledge so formulated is all that we require. Many men are ordained even without such knowledge, and when it is obtained it is due often enough to the initiative of the man himself and not to the guidance of those responsible for his training. But, in any case, this is not sufficient ; it concentrates attention on too definite a line of approach to God. It is the old trouble of teaching the doubter rather than educating him ; it is too cut and dried. We should try, not so much to prove Christ true by argument in the face of certain criticisms and objections and along certain beaten tracks, but rather to help the doubter to find *his* God in Christ. He can find Him along no general line of approach ; he will not have started where the vicar started ; he will not correspond in his method of approach in exact detail to anything laid down in any book of apologetics. He speaks of his difficulties as intellectual, but that is an anæmic description unless we realise that we must take also into consideration his age, class of life, profession, family circumstances and temperament. I have referred to such individual treatment as Christ's own method ; it can be noted in His dealings with the woman at the well, Nathanael, Nicodemus, the woman taken in adultery, Mary and Martha, St. Peter, St. Thomas, the dying thief. The most striking case of all is that recorded of the young man in St. Mark x, where, to one in search of the knowledge of God, Christ replied with a cut-and-dried formula which was the stock-in-trade of the priesthood of the day, using it as a test, and then beholding and loving *him* answered the individual. We examine these various characters

in the Gospel story without often realising that we can trace their different characteristics only because we are studying their contact with One to Whom the individuality of each was of the supremest interest because he cared intensely for them. If we met them in a parish we should class them together ; we have had no sort of specialist training to enable us to regard them as distinct one from the other. We are given one intellectual presentation of the Faith; we are allowed to be content with one narrow line of approach for—(let us put the Gospel characters into modern terms)—the young man about town, the middle-aged intellectual, the East-ender, the feeble Christian and the fussy Christian, the prostitute, and the woman who's gone wrong once or twice because " Jack's been so long away in France and a woman can't help these feelings sometimes."

And thus to the point. There is no attempt or at any rate there is in results no evidence of the attempt either at our universities or theological colleges to teach us any practical psychology. At the age of twenty-three or twenty-four we are supposed to be experts in dealing with boy scouts and young men, but many young priests could not so much as spell ' adolescence ' ; yet there is much that they could have been told about the varying mental, moral, and emotional phenomena of this stage.

The zealous young missionary goes straight from his ordination to preach to and teach middle-aged men who are no less anxious than he for the coming of the Kingdom of God, though they may no longer have the fiery enthusiasms of early youth. And if the young

priest is out of sympathy and understanding with such men it is not altogether his fault; nobody has ever drawn his attention to the mental and emotional changes brought by advancing years; there exists an excellent book on the psychology of middle age, but his trainers have never mentioned it to him, and probably would not have done so even had they known of its existence.

He is called upon to minister amongst women; intimate acquaintance with women outside his own family is often very limited. There is much that he needs to know and might be told about marriage and motherhood. The psychology of the prostitute in its various stages; the close connection between religious emotion and sexual impulse; the strength and extent of temptations to and opportunities for immorality which have never come within the range of his own knowledge or personal experience; the psychology of the drunkard and the criminal; the artistic temperament; the attitudes towards religion and life in general obtaining in different strata of society from his own—he is told nothing of all these things. It is genially supposed, I know, that three or four years at a university and a year spent at a college settlement or in travel will give to us the knowledge of mankind required for our life's work. In exceptional cases this may be partly true, but, even so, the Church which commissions us makes no endeavour to discover that we are so instructed or to repair the omissions. The arguments with which the average young priest is equipped against immorality or dishonesty are often pathetically inadequate because they are drawn only from his own experience of life and based too often

solely upon a religious faith which may not be shared by the man or woman to whom he makes his appeal ; nor do they often allow for individual characteristics and circumstances.

There is no royal road to virtue ; there is no rule of thumb for saints ; there is no beaten track to God.

The laity complain that we do not understand them. Small wonder ! We say that our service as army chaplains has taught us much. A large part of it we might have learnt before.

The defects and omissions in our training may be summarised as follows :—

(*a*) We have to teach and are not trained teachers.

(*b*) Our education in preaching is inadequate.

(*c*) We do not know the layman's point of view and the real intellectual obstacles to the ordinary man in the modern world.

(*d*) We are not trained to deal with the individual. Medical men are not qualified until they have studied the varieties of physical development, the normalities and abnormalities of bodily disease. We are supposed to be doctors of the soul, spiritual advisers, and we are supplied with no expert knowledge of the varieties of moral and spiritual development, the causes and courses of moral disease or of spiritual debility.

These failures of the past might be remedied in the future in the following ways :—

(*a*) Before ordination attendance should be compelled at a course of lectures on educational method with practical illustrations. This is the minimum.

(*b*) If the other requirements are met this defect would tend to disappear.

(*c*) There must be courses of lectures on the Moderns, with an insistence that they be read. It may or may not be possible to insist upon a knowledge of modern philosophic thought in the strict sense of the term. But the minimum required is a thorough acquaintance with the works of some of the writers who influence the ordinary man and woman—Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, George Moore, Robert Blatchford, Mrs. Besant, and so forth.

(*d*) Every theological college should have as a permanent member of its staff an expert in practical psychology as affecting religion. He would lecture, he would work largely by discussion in common room and privately ; he would stimulate interest and intelligence by the Socratic method. He would set an essay question each term on a set-book. One example may be quoted to make my meaning clear :—

Set-book—" Sinister Street," by Compton Mackenzie. Question—How far in your opinion is the character of Michael true to life ? Do you conceive all such phases to be possible in one individual ? What mistakes, if any, were made, in your opinion, by those who had a share in his religious development ?

In addition to this there should be for every theological course without exception at least one course of lectures delivered by a woman. She would speak of marriage and motherhood, the moral and spiritual aspects and tendencies of adolescence and conception from the woman's point of view, the feminine temperament, and so forth.

One can imagine the sort of examination paper that might be set at the end of the term on the whole matter

of individual work. The value of the answers given would lie, not in their correctness, but in the opportunity they afforded for discussion and for drawing out the student's own individuality and directing it along the right lines.

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All these ideas may read regrettably technical and cold, but there must be surely method and intelligence as well as enthusiasm in our attempts to win souls for Christ, and nothing need be cold that has the Love of God for its source and its object. It is because we love Christ's sheep one by one that we must spare no pains to equip ourselves as wise and faithful shepherds.

We may consider briefly two objections that will be made in application to most of the foregoing suggestions. We shall be told (*a*) that most of such knowledge will come, perhaps can only come, through personal experience and that it cannot be learnt beforehand. That is reasonable enough ; every year of his ministerial life will teach a man more. But there is a very great deal that I have learned, discovered, experienced since the year of my ordination which I need not have been left to find out. We could be warned what to expect ; we could be instructed in types of human experience or personality ; we could learn certain lines of treatment which had been proved to be useful or helpful, and warned against others that were bound to fail. A university career, however varied, followed by a year's travel and a few months in the slums cannot even in the most exceptional case give any young man that understanding of human nature that he will need.

And if anything can be done before he is commissioned to save his future flock in his first curacies from the mistakes through which at their expense he will, supposedly, gain the necessary experience, it should be done.

(*b*) And before now I have been answered thus : " In all that you say you surely belittle the grace of the Holy Spirit in ordination, through Whom alone the gifts of wisdom and understanding can come." There is a very pointed reply to this rebuke. We are not accustomed to expect God to make good unwarrantable deficiencies or omissions ; it is a view of the working of the Holy Spirit which is neither sensible nor reverent. No ordination candidate would dare to utter such an evasion to any Vice-Principal who deplored his slackness in learning the varying fortunes of the Kings of Israel and Judah. The *reductio ad absurdum* would be to say : " If the grace of the Holy Spirit is so exercised, why have colleges or training at all ? "

In conclusion, it is obvious that the question of length of training and the problem of finance and supply lie behind any change in the present system. But even supposing that no improvement can yet be made in that direction, much could be done by readjustment. There is one readjustment in particular which is of the greatest urgency. An average programme for the more fortunate ordinand after leaving the university is as follows :—

(i) Twelve or eighteen months' travelling tutorship or slumming, or some of each.

(ii) A year at a theological college concluding with the examination and ordination.

I suggest the following change :—

(i) A year at a theological college, which shall include the passing of the Bishop's examination.

(ii) A year in the world—either travelling or in business or social work.

(iii) Three to six months at a theological college in retreat.

The advantages would be :—

(*a*) The candidate would be freed from the worry attendant upon passing an examination just at the time when he should be concentrating entirely upon his own spiritual and devotional preparations. It is amazing that the Bishops should ever, except in unavoidable circumstances, allow a man to do any work for, or to have any anxiety about, an examination within at least three months of his ordination.

(*b*) After a year among the necessarily narrowing influences of a theological college the man would be flung once more into the world to rid him of "the ecclesiastical touch" and to test the habits of devotion and of thought under conditions similar to those under which he proposes to teach the average layman to maintain them. Salutary indeed.

(*c*) The few months immediately preceding ordination would remain for revision, meditation, preparation.

The foregoing study of the training for Holy Orders closes with the diaconate, but there is much to be said about the conditions and length of the diaconate itself, the training of special men to special work, the whole question of the selection and presentation of candidates, a permanent diaconate, working-class candidates—all of which is outside the scope of this Essay.

Improve the training of the clergy and what will happen ? In public school and university, in private school and Sunday school, in church and class-room, there will be a religious education worthy of the name. Any other reform, whether it be of the Prayer-book or of ecclesiastical organisation, cannot be expected to succeed unless it is accompanied by a radical change in the methods by which are trained and commissioned the officers of Christ's Church.

XII

PERSONAL RELIGION IN CHURCH LIFE

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XII

PERSONAL RELIGION IN CHURCH LIFE

It is an acknowledged fact that in all departments of life the war has brought great changes. It has set before men new ideals, given them fresh views of life, called them to the performance of new duties involving much sacrifice, and so changed the whole atmosphere of our social life that, for good or evil, it is recognised that England, after the war, cannot be the same England as it was before. In every direction, too, the war has opened up a vast field of inquiry, and we have more and yet more Committees and Commissions "sitting to inquire and report," and suggestions are poured out upon a busy and bewildered world. *Après la guerre* is the cry everywhere, and we are assured that when peace comes all these movements and activities will settle into concrete form and great results will follow in trade, finance, and politics and generally in the whole life of the country and Empire. Into this field of inquiry the Church has entered—it would be strange if it were not so—and apart from the special movements which have been set on foot to meet the

special requirements of the moment, such, for instance, as the National Mission of Repentance and Hope, apart from the special inquiries into every aspect of Church life which are being carried out by committees appointed for the purpose, all thoughtful men and women are asking what effect the war has had upon Religion generally, and particularly what effect it has had upon the religion of the men who are serving with our Forces in every corner of the world. Many answers have been given to this question and much written both privately and publicly from different points of view; but I suspect we shall not be able to form any true estimate until the men come home, and settle down under "peace conditions." Then so much will depend on the readiness and ability of the Church to rise to the occasion and meet an opportunity which can, probably, never occur again in the history of the world, certainly never again in our day.

It is a big question which the Church and the Church's leaders have to face, and it may well be that the whole future of our Church for generations will depend upon the answer we shall give, and the line we propose to take. Much, no doubt, will follow from the deliberations of the various committees. Wise changes will be made in the public services, and wide latitude given in the use of informal or less formal services to meet the needs of the millions of men who have been attracted by and become used to such services in the Field. Many of them, perhaps most, have never been attracted or held by any services before the war: but I must add the warning that we have no guarantee that they *will* be attracted or held by *any* form of service when the

special war conditions are removed, and the need for God's help seems more remote, unless we can do something to create and maintain in religion the personal sense of responsibility which has been one of the features of their service in the State.

Before the war, and even under war conditions, one has noticed a tendency both in Church and State and in the individual either to evade responsibility altogether, or to shift it on to other shoulders. In the State Commissions have been asked to shoulder burdens which seemed more properly to belong to the parent body. Parents have expected schoolmasters not only to educate their children, but to assume the chief responsibility in religion and morals, and where there has been failure they have assumed that it is the school training, not the home influence and example, that is to blame. In the Church the laity have blamed the clergy, as a body, for the "failure of religion," through lack of definite teaching, excess or defect of zeal, and many other faults of omission or commission. The clergy have blamed the laity for apathy and want of interest in their Church, and neglect of the public services of the Book of Common Prayer. The capitalist has blamed the "working man," and the "working man" the employer, and all have sought to shift the burden of responsibility from their own shoulders to those of others, while the newspapers have selected their own special scapegoats and sought to drive them into some wilderness outside the writers' areas. It has, perhaps, been left to the men on active service by sea and land to recognise and reconcile the Apostolic injunctions—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so

fulfil the law of Christ," and "Every man shall bear his own burden"; and it is certainly, to my mind, in the working out of these seemingly contradictory orders, and the recognition of personal and corporate responsibility, that the way of salvation lies both in Church and State. Men on active service *have* to bear their own burdens, and share with others those which are common to all, and responsibility, in the field, is pretty sharply defined and cannot be evaded or shifted on to other shoulders. This sense of individual responsibility in a corporate life is, I believe, one of the outstanding lessons of the war to many of us, a lesson which is being deeply impressed on thousands and tens of thousands of men in our new army, and it is that which I want to translate into the field of religion.

When we speak of "The Church" to the average layman he has no conception, or only a very vague one, of the meaning of the term. He may think of it, locally, as a body of well-meaning people who "go to church" and generally "do what the parson says," and he associates with it the clergy, churchwardens, district visitors, Sunday school teachers and other workers he knows, who touch the fringe of his life. He has been baptized, perhaps confirmed, and possibly, even, he is an infrequent communicant; but he has no conception of any personal responsibility in the life and action of the Church. The words, "ye are the Body of Christ and members in particular," have no meaning to him in his own life. He retains an Englishman's right to do what he chooses, and exercises an Englishman's privilege to "grouse" about "the Church's failure" without a thought in his mind that

the Church's failure is partly his own. These characteristics are not peculiar to what we call, rather stupidly in these days, "the working classes"; they are common to *all* classes, and are found equally amongst Public School and 'Varsity men and those who form what are known as the upper and middle classes of society. In the Army, and the Army to-day is the Nation, this idea of the Church is as common to the officer as it is to the private. I believe, in all truth, that even the *majority* of those who are regular churchgoers and communicants at home neither feel nor accept any personal responsibility for the life and well-being of the Church. If they think of it at all they relegate such responsibility to clergy and "representative laity," just as, in the State, we send men into Parliament and look to them to regulate the life of the nation, reserving to ourselves the right to criticise and grumble at the results. That the life of the State has been enormously quickened by the wider interest shown, under the stress of war conditions, by the average man, and the inclusion in public offices of men drawn from without the usual circle of political life, will, I think, be acknowledged by all, and it is all to the good that such men are taking a personal share in the corporate life of the nation, and not confining their activities to their own private affairs. It would surely be to the immense benefit of the Church, if we could quicken the interest of the great body of the laity in her affairs, and bring men into her councils from outside the small body of "representative laymen" on whom we now chiefly rely for help and counsel. But it would not be so, it might even be disastrous, if the appeal to

these men is anything less than the appeal of Christ, and if they should come to the Church as an earthly body, and not the Body of Christ of which they are members in particular. We want the men, we want them to take a living interest in the Church, we want them to come to the services of the Church, but far more we want them to come to God, and we must not and dare not assume that it is the same thing. Let me put it in this way: we do not want them to come to church "because we want them," but because *God* wants them, and we shall not get them to come, or if we get them we shall not keep them, unless and until they realise this, and realise, too, that they want God's help and cannot live without it, and that God's help is given in a very special way to those who seek Him through prayer, and praise, and sacrament within the Body of His Church.

I have sat often in Convocation in the days before the war, and in Committee since, when we have been engaged in discussion on the revision of the Prayer-book and kindred subjects, and thought that, absolutely necessary though these things be, they are not the things of *first* importance in the Church's life. Absolutely necessary they are, for the Church must be like the new army of this war, and while retaining all the doctrine of the Apostolic Church and all the practice which cannot be severed from the doctrine, she must forge new weapons and learn new ways and provide fresh means to meet the needs of modern warfare in the spiritual fight, and enable her soldiers to stand, and withstand the onslaughts of modern thought and

action. This great world-wide war found the Allies unprepared and unprovided for the struggle that lay before them, and the enemy gained much advantage from the fact. Each year has lessened this advantage, and as we call men to the colours to-day we are ready to clothe, equip, and train them, pass them up to the line, and maintain them there abundantly supplied with all the requirements of complex modern warfare. So the fighting men depend upon the forethought, the care, and the organised service of those at home. Just so must the Church think and plan and have all ready, and we shall owe much to those at home if, sinking all differences which are not differences of bedrock principle,—(no man may cast these away)—they will carry through at once such revision of our services as is needed and possible, and give us such freedom of action as may lawfully be given in other matters to enable us to adapt our methods to the modern need. But revised services will not help us much if the majority of the men stand apart in the future as they have done in the past from the public worship of the Church. Many with whom I have spoken were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with our services in their home life, they simply had no use for them, and when the question is put "Why don't men come to church?" the answer is not always that they "don't like" the services, or the parson, but that they have found no need in their life for any services at all, and therefore they do not come.

The problem, therefore, is how are we to inspire in these men the desire for prayer and worship, and above all for Communion, that central act of Fellowship with

God and man, without which all Christian life is absolutely incomplete ?

I find my answer in the record of this war, and I trace our failure in the past to a widespread misconception both as to the meaning of what men call religion and the character of the Christ life both as it is shown in the Gospel and in the world to-day. It is a commonplace to those who have seen men's lives and actions out here, and it must be so to those at home who have read of the many deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice in this war, that most men are living nearer to God than they or we have realised. And it is not only the greater deeds which are recorded that make one sure of this, or those which find their place in the list of " mentions " ; every hour of the day and night men at the Front are showing qualities which are absolutely Christlike in their character and in their influence on other men, little though they recognise it themselves, and so little do they recognise it that they think we cannot be speaking seriously when we say that it is so. These are the men " whose faith was never in our creeds express'd, but in their human lives Christ's life confess'd." Those who blame the Church for the failure of the past will probably say, and say with much truth, that the fault lies largely with the clergy ; that we have preached a conventional Christ remote from the true Christ of the Gospel and daily life, and that we have sought rather to bring men to church than to God, or at least that we have not taught men how to find God in Church and service and sacrament, or how to connect these with their daily life, with the result that men's eyes are so blinded that when the

Christ life is lived in their midst, nay even when they are very near to living it themselves, they cannot recognise it.

Well, granted that this is partly, or even, if you will, largely true, it will not help us to dwell much upon it except in so far as it gives us a line in our future ministrations, and helps us to avoid the old mistakes. Probably both clergy and laity could break a good many panes of glass in each other's windows if they took to throwing stones, but it would be neither a useful nor a very seemly process in our present distress, and I, for one, am humbly willing to concede the point, and admit my shortcomings, if it will help to bring us nearer to the end we have in view.

Out here with the Expeditionary Force perhaps the most essential difference between our present life as chaplains and our peace-time work as clergy in the Church at home has been in our hourly association with the officers and men to whom we minister. We live in the homes of our people, we eat and drink and sleep amongst them, we are with them in the field and in their billets, we dress like them, and we are learning to think with them. We may, perhaps, be teaching them, but certainly they are teaching us, and the old caste barrier is, in the best sense, I believe, being broken down by the free intercourse and exchange of ideas between parson and people. And what are they teaching us? I do not venture to speak for others, whose experience and judgments may differ from my own, but simply express my own deep-rooted conviction. These men are preaching Christ crucified to us, though they do not know it, and though so many

of them do not consciously come to the Crucified for help. Many a one whose life might be justly criticised from the standpoint of religion as we understand it may yet say, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus," and often these marks have covered the marks and ugly wounds of sin and shame. They make no claim to "righteousness," but I believe they are the very men for whom Christ in His time on earth would have found a place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Many of them come, when they have the opportunity, to such services as we can offer, and I believe far more would come to Communion if we could only get them to understand its connection with their daily life, and that it was ordained to be the "ration" for every fighting soldier's constant use, and not the "iron ration" for emergency, to be touched only by special order.

"The parish priest of Austerity
Climbed up a high church steeple
To be nearer God, so that he might hand
His word down to the people.

"And in sermon script he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven,
And he dropped it down on the people's heads
Two times, one day in seven.

"In his time God said, 'Come down and die,'
And he called out from the steeple,
'Where art thou, Lord?', and the Lord replied—
'Down here, amongst the people.'"

I have no idea who wrote these lines, and I hope they are not "copyright." I saw them by chance in a Nonconformist magazine, and apologise to an unknown editor for stealing them—they rather fit the

case. God *is* " down here amongst the people," and we must penetrate, in our work, to the personal life of those to whom we minister, and show them Christ, not in books, or sermon, or history, but in the lives of men and women, and so teach them to find Him, and finding Him to strengthen their lives through His in the Sacraments and services of the Church. We shall but be following our Lord's own missionary example during His three years' ministry on earth. The first disciples were attracted, not by what we call religion, or by services, but by a Man and His life. They learnt to know Him, to love Him, and to trust Him, and they asked Him to teach them to pray. And when His Bodily Presence was taken from them, their trust in Him was so great that they remembered His promises, and believed His word, " Lo, I am with you always " ; they obeyed His command " Do this in remembrance of Me," and in the Sacrament of His Body and His Blood, and in the prayers they had learnt from Him, they found strength sufficient to make their lives a witness to His own, and to show Christ to the world as a living power among men. It was this personal religion of men inspired by the Holy Spirit, united in the Fellowship of the Divine Society, and fed by the Sacraments of the Church, which began the conversion of the world, carrying on all that Jesus began to do and to teach in His life on earth. Our men have shown a wonderful capacity for sacrifice, unselfishness, cheerfulness and many other Christian virtues, but not directly for Christ's sake. If we can only show them how near to the Kingdom of Heaven these things have brought them,

and how like in character to Christ they have made them, if, in a word, we can show them the real Christ of the Gospels, so truly human "down here amongst the people," and teach them to love and trust Him as His first disciples did, they will surely come to church, to prayer and sacrament, not because we ask them nor for any conventional reason, but to meet Him in the place of His own appointing, and to receive from Him the Sacramental Grace which only He can give to enable them to maintain in their lives this Christ-likeness. We have got the "Body of Christ" in our midst, complete in its organisation, but incomplete in its membership; incomplete, not only because of our unhappy divisions whereby so many have separated themselves "officially" from its ministration, but incomplete because so very many of its nominal roll, the men with C. of E. identity disks, children to whom the Church gave spiritual birth in baptism, are not conscious of their relationship, or of the duties and privileges which are theirs by right in this Kingdom of God.

We must by every means in our power drive home this sense of personal responsibility to the Corporate Body, teach men to claim their rights, and use their privileges. Show them the essential union between the Body and its members, so that "whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured all the members rejoice with it." In the universal service of our day all men are learning this lesson in the service of the State; it is impressed on every soldier that in his individual life and by his personal conduct and character he honours or degrades

the uniform he wears. Cannot we teach the Soldiers of Christ this lesson, so that they may understand that "the failure of the Church" at this crisis in her history is an individual matter and most largely due to the failure of her members who have not rallied to her support? "I am a scandal to the Church and not the Church is so to me" may well be the confession of many a Churchman, whether priest or layman, who, neglecting his duties, has yet blamed the Church for her neglect of him.

May God give new vision and grace to all estates of men in His holy Church that *every* member of the same in His vocation and ministry may truly and godly serve, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

XIII

MAN TO MAN

By the Rev. JAMES O. HANNAY
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XIII

MAN TO MAN

I.

FAITH.

We sat together under the shelter—the insufficient shelter—of the verandah roof of an estaminet. My companion was a boy, a young officer who had that morning received his orders to go into the firing line. We sat on a little iron table and swung our legs while the snow fell thick on the road outside and was blown in powdery drifts into the corners of the verandah. We were waiting for a tram, a lorry, an ambulance, or any other vehicle which would carry us into the neighbouring town.

I did not know that boy at all well, though I wished to. It is not an easy thing to know these young officers. Twenty-five years or so—I had lived that much longer than he had—make a gulf which it is exceedingly difficult to cross. Besides, I was a parson and he was—I do not know what he was before he took to soldiering. That made another gulf. There is no use denying the fact. It is not a question of

class or military rank. It is hard for a padre to get into touch with men in the ranks. It is just as hard for him to get into touch with commissioned officers. The officer is a man. The private is a man. The padre is, officially, not quite a man or perhaps a little more than a man, at all events something else, a priest. Therefore I was particularly pleased when that boy began to talk to me about the things he was really thinking.

He was going into the fighting. He told me he did not expect to come out alive. This was not a reasoned belief. He had not been working out chances or dwelling unduly on calculations about a subaltern's expectation of life. He was the victim of one of those odd convictions which we call presentiments which turn out to be wrong quite as often as they are fulfilled. I forget what I said. I daresay it was "what I ought to have said." It was probably inane enough to put that boy off talking to me altogether. But it did not. He went on.

"I wish you'd tell me what you think about it, padre," he said. "Is there really anything afterwards?"

I cannot give his exact words, for I do not remember them. He repeated himself a good deal. He did not succeed in saying at once what he wanted to say; but he made his meaning quite clear to me in the end.

"I'd like you to tell me," he said, "as man to man what you really think about it. Do we go on living afterwards in any sort of way or —— ?"

He struck a match to light a cigarette. A gust of wind, which carried a flurry of snow round our legs,

blew the match out again. I daresay it was that which suggested his next words :

" Or do we just go out ? "

" I know the Creed," he went on, and he did not say *your* Creed, or *the Church's* Creed, but just *the* Creed. " But that's not what I want. I want to know what you really believe yourself, as a man, you know."

Then I suppose he felt that he owed some sort of apology for talking to me in such a way.

" You mustn't think I'm an atheist," he said, " or a sceptic, or anything like that. I'm not. I used to go to church pretty regularly. I used to go to Communion sometimes—with my mother, you know. I never doubted about any of those things, the things I was taught. I supposed they were all right. Anyhow, I didn't bother. But now I want to know."

When Stephen, the first martyr, believed that he was about to die, he saw " Jesus standing on the right hand of God." My friend's position was plainly something quite different from his.

And this boy's case is not unique. It is not even rare. I am inclined to regard it as typical. Just such is the attitude of ordinary Englishmen towards the doctrines of the Christian faith. They know, in broad outline at least, the fundamental truths which the Church teaches. They have so far accepted these truths that they have not denied or attempted to deny them. But they have not connected the truths with ordinary life. Life is one thing, real, pressing, intensely important. The Creed is another thing, very excellent in its way, deserving of a certain respect, but belonging to a different region, not concerned with

or at all bearing upon practical affairs. The attitude is logically impossible and intellectually absurd. But that does not matter. Very few of us are troubled by logic or inclined to give weight to intellectual considerations. We have our faith on one side of a high wall and ourselves on the other; and we get on well enough until—well, the time came for that friend of mine when he wanted to get his faith over the wall, to set it down on the path his feet trod, to find out, man to man, whether there was anything in it.

We padres, who serve or have served with the Army, spend a good deal of our time with men who want to talk about religion. Most of those who come to us or whom we get at are already religious men. They are good Churchmen or pious Nonconformists. What they want of us is comfort and strength. They want to be assured by the sound of the human voice of the hope that is in them. They want to hear blessed words, phrases consecrated as the expressions of their souls' deep emotions. The work we do for these men is the easiest part of our duty. It is of high value, and if we do no more than that we yet do something real. But these men are a small minority in the Army. Six, eight, ten, twenty of them will collect in the church tent of an evening. A thousand, two thousand do not go there at all. There are also men with "difficulties," real intellectual difficulties, or the crotchets of minds naturally inclined to crankiness. It is chiefly the latter who come to the padre, and I do not think we do much good with them. But these again are a small, a tiny minority. Most men do not come to us at all and we find it very difficult to get at them. I do not believe

that it is the padre's position as an officer which creates the difficulty. In the old army it may have been so. But our vast levies of civilian men have not had the existence of a super-class hammered into them, and they would not, in any case, recognise a parson as belonging to it. The padre is remote, not because he wears a Sam Browne belt, but because he is suspected of being unable or unwilling to discuss plain matters "man to man." Exactly the same difficulty existed in civil life. Army discipline has not made it any worse. The war has forced us to recognise it, and that, as far as it goes, is all to the good.

"I believe in the life everlasting." The facts of war, continually present death and constant danger, have made men wish to drag that statement out of the sanctified shadows of Gothic arches and set it in the glaring light of ordinary day, to see if there is anything in it. They want to do the same thing with half a dozen more similar statements. They want to ask questions about them, "man to man." Are we, the official guardians of these truths, prepared to take down our altar crosses, on which our eyes have rested so long with peaceful reverence, carry them to the smith's forge, and see how their metal stands the test of hammering? That is exactly what the ordinary soldier—and the ordinary soldier is now the ordinary man—thinks we will not do.

Plainly this is not a matter of intellectual scepticism, of faith blighted by the higher criticism or scorched by the materialism of science, or anything of that sort. Men like my friend are not helped by our apologetics.

I do not want to undervalue the reasoned defences of the faith. For men educated in a certain way, possessed of active minds and with ample leisure, books written against higher critics, materialistic philosophers and other enemies, are excellent things, stimulating and agreeable reading, almost as stimulating and agreeable as the works of the enemies themselves. But they are not food for the lambs of Christ's flock who have never heard of Harnack and would never have heard of Nietszche if some orator had not discovered in August, 1914, that Nietszche caused the war.

Nor is it any use saying that the want of definite Church teaching, in schools or from the pulpit, is responsible for the position of my friend. As a matter of fact that boy had some teaching, quite definite as far as it went. He knew his Creed. He knew, or at one time had known, his Catechism. He had been prepared for Confirmation. He actually carried about with him a little book of Eucharistic meditations, glowing with teaching so definite and so 'churchy' that many people would have cursed it. Yet after all that, he wanted to know whether he would live on in any fashion after the German bullet which he expected went through his head. I have no doubt that definite Church teaching is an excellent thing. I know it is. Many of the very best men I met out in France came from parishes at home where definite Church teaching was the rule, but no amount of definiteness will create the sense of reality. I was once taught astronomy, as definitely as I could be taught anything; but if, by some freak of fortune, I were to find myself in a position in which my peace of mind depended on my certainty about a

parallax, I should be in an evil plight. I do not now know what a parallax is.

The fact seems to be that we have been teaching true and important things in such a way as to leave men with the impression that they do not matter. Partly this is because they have not mattered nearly enough to us, the teachers. That is a very trite observation. It amounts to just this : the ordinary man, the baptized outsider, would stand a much better chance of having a sound working belief if the inner circle of the Church, the clergy and pious laity, were much stronger in the faith than they are. If we were strong enough in religious faith, as strong as we are in our faith in the security of the 5 per cent. War Loan, we should not find so much difficulty in inducing other people to believe that there is something in it. Partly also we have been teaching, along with the very important things, a number of other things which are not nearly so important, which do not strike the ordinary man as of any importance at all. There are, when all is said, very few things in the Christian faith which are of vital importance for practical purposes of life to most men. There are a great many other things which may be of use to a few people, but must always strike common, very busy men as, let us say, trimmings. They do not matter much to anyone. They do not matter at all to most people. By emphasising the comparatively unimportant and laying tremendous stress on what is sure to seem unreal, we have set the vital things in an atmosphere of unreality. It would not startle us much if a man were to say : " Tell me, as man to man, is there really anything in that theory

of yours about fasting Communion ? " It does startle us horribly when he asks the same question about life everlasting. Yet it is very natural that he should. We have been teaching, not perhaps fasting Communion, but something of similar importance as if it were as vital as the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. Common sense teaches the common man that for him, busy with life, it is not real at all. He has inevitably come to feel that the other things, which we have never emphasised, are not real either.

II.

MORALS.

In " A Student in Arms " there are some chapters dealing with the religion of our soldiers. Nothing has been written on this subject more interesting and more stimulating than these chapters. In them Mr. Hankey emphasises the fact that the Church and the clergy—organised religion and clergy of every kind—have singularly little influence with the men of our new armies ; and this other fact, that the men's lives are fine examples of certain virtues, generally considered to be essentially Christian. A great deal has been written in explanation, denial, and support of these statements. It may fairly be said that the explanations have failed to explain and the denials have failed to convince. We may quote the Archbishop of Dublin, a sober and careful critic of the testimony of direct observers, in general support of Mr. Hankey's statements : " Only a minority of our soldiers are accus-

tomed to look to the Church as their spiritual home, and the organised institutions of the Christian religion have little attraction for them. . . . But the practical Christianity of the trenches is very real and very widespread. Patience, faithfulness, cheerfulness, unselfishness : these are great qualities."

The Archbishop might have gone further. Instead of making his own list of virtues he might have taken almost the whole of St. Paul's list of the fruits of the Spirit. Our soldiers—that is to say the best part of the young manhood of the Empire—possess in high degree just these virtues, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness. This sounds like a paradox, for of all such catalogues none, surely, is at first sight less military than St. Paul's. But if we take the Apostle's words and translate them into a language which is not petrified by theological use, if we strip the things meant of the reverent draperies of ancient pieties, we see at once that instead of being a paradox this is a simple statement of fact. By love St. Paul meant more than comradeship ; but he did mean comradeship, which elsewhere he calls brotherly love. In joy we recognise cheerfulness. Is peace—the inward peace which exists in spite of war—anything else than an outlook upon life untroubled by repining and fear ? Long-suffering is surely the power of enduring, unrebelliously, hardship and even injustice. Gentleness and goodness are seen in unselfish, untiring care for the weak and suffering. Is it not true that meekness, the ready subordination of personal will to the will of others, is the inward spirit of discipline ? St. Paul would surely have recognised his list translated thus ;

though it is no doubt harder for us, coated with the quickly-hardening varnish of conventional religiousness, to recognise the fruits of the Spirit in lives which display everywhere comradeship, cheerfulness, endurance, calm, kindliness, and discipline.

This is nearly, not quite, the whole of St. Paul's list. There remain faith and temperance. Of faith I have already written something. About temperance there is this to be said: There is in England a certain sapless Puritanism which is perpetually confusing life with vice, which is indeed so much afraid of life that it sees no hope for society until all "cakes and ale" have been utterly abolished. It is the spirit of a minor *bourgeoisie*, cramped and therefore bitter. It has from time to time grossly exaggerated the prevalence of drunkenness and sexual immorality among our men. But even if we were to grant the truth of the worst that has been said or hinted, if we were to get up another scare about "war babies," and were to denounce the Expeditionary Force canteens as homes of intemperance, we might still demand of this Puritan spirit an entire readjustment of its scheme of moral values. Christ certainly regarded these open and obvious sins of sense as the least hopelessly deadly. Speaking to those who in His days mistook respectability for religion, He said, "The publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you."

I am far from desiring to represent our men as saints, and I deplore deeply the amount of drunkenness and immorality which certainly exists. But I resent the talk about the failure of Christianity and the assertion, far too often made, that our soldiers are essentially

irreligious. If English Christianity, or, let us say, the Anglican Church, has failed, it is in this—that it has not realised or understood the greatness of its own accomplishment, the wonderful thing it has done in sending out into the world men inspired with the spirit which we see. If, indeed, it is true that these men are irreligious, then religion is something other than what Christ taught ; and many of us will choose ourselves to bear the same reproach, to be set down along with these men as irreligious, in the hope that at last Christ also will be found in our company.

It is a very puzzling thing that the Church has failed to recognise religion in her own children, and that her sons, in this at least believing what the Church says, regard themselves as irreligious. Both these things are so. Men who are constantly doing the very things Christ wants them to do, whose lives are obviously affected by His Spirit, will say, have often said to me, " But of course I'm not a religious man. I never took much interest in that sort of thing. I don't think I've been in church, except to be married, since I was a boy." Priests, very faithful and devoted, will complain that religion has no hold on the majority of the men. Made bitter by the disappointment of their souls, they even gird at congregations gathered unwillingly for some compulsory church parade. What is the meaning of this painful contradiction between fact and theory ?

I suppose that the Church in the past has builded better than she knew. The instinct of the people, wiser than the science of the priests, has seized upon the essential things. The clergy have been occupied mainly with observances, have tried to train men to

do this and that outward thing in this or that little way. We have been endeavouring to tie the growing shoots of rose bushes, espalier-wise, to the rigid laths of trellis work. We have failed in the endeavour ; but while we mourned our failure the rose trees flowered. A much greater thing than we consciously aimed at has been accomplished. While we were keeping registers of our parochial guilds, men, all unknown to us or to themselves, were learning the meaning of the Cross of Christ. Perhaps the Christian tradition of a Christian land is a much stronger thing than we guessed ; and it has not been in vain that bells have knolled to church and the Cross has been set high above the streets of towns and the pleasant ways of country places. Perhaps the many prayers said daily in empty churches have not been said uselessly, but in some way beyond our understanding have won their answer. Or would it not be better to say, simply, humbly, that a spirit, greater than any of ours, has been at work in the nation, using our blind efforts to its own ends ? *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis.*

XIV

THE SOLDIER'S RELIGION

By the Rev. PHILIP C. T. CRICK, M.A.

Senior Chaplain to the Forces, —— Division; Fellow and Dean of Clare College, Cambridge; Examining Chaplain to the Archbishop of York.

XIV

THE SOLDIER'S RELIGION

I.

Not very many years ago a few friends whose work lay among the younger members of one of our old universities were comparing their experiences and generalising broadly upon the characteristics of the average undergraduate, when one of their number, whose name is well remembered for his sympathy towards, and the influence which he exercised over, his pupils, interposed with the remark, "There is *no* 'average' undergraduate." Two years' experience of work in France has shown the writer that this saying is profoundly true of any body of men, and must serve as a necessary qualification for any tentative generalisation in the pages that follow. In our citizen army of to-day every shade of thought is represented, in matters of religion as in other spheres, and it would be almost certainly impossible to find any formula that would be true of even the majority of men now serving in France in respect of what they think about God and the things of God. All that can be attempted is a general impression based upon a limited but concrete experience of what is moving in the hearts and minds

of some at least of the officers and men now serving in the British Army on the Western Front.

Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt. In our citizen army the soldier of to-day is almost universally the civilian of yesterday, and, except for the undoubted influence which the war has had upon his mentality, it is to be expected that his attitude towards religion would be fundamentally the same now as it was in peace-time. In other words, when we speak of the religion of the soldier, we are not dealing with the religious views of an isolated class of men, so much as gauging the effect upon a large section of the nation of the work and the teaching of the Church during the past generation. And it follows that our inquiry will entail a constant reference to the Church and her work before the war. It may be emphasised in passing that not the least of the privileges enjoyed by chaplains serving with the army in the field is the absolutely unique opportunity given to them, through their close association with men of all classes, of obtaining an insight into their lives and thoughts which was quite impossible, to any comparable extent, under the old conditions of parochial life.

A very short experience of work among soldiers seems to lead inevitably to the conclusion that the chief element in the situation is an almost universal lack of religious education. It would not be too much to say of the great majority both of officers and men that they are frankly ignorant of most of the intellectual propositions of Christianity; and in consequence there is also found a very general absence of what may be called conscious churchmanship. There are, of

course, exceptions to this, as to all generalisations. Individuals may be found, in every unit in the Army, who remain faithful to their Church teaching and provide a nucleus from whom chaplains may make a beginning in the extension of their work among the other men. Or, again, there are small units, such as casualty clearing stations, which stay for a long period of time in the same place and retain their *personnel* practically unchanged. In cases such as these, where the chaplains have the advantage of personal contact for a considerable period with a limited number of men, some remarkable results have been achieved. Or, lastly, there are a certain number of regiments which for various reasons—such as, for instance, the circumstances under which they are recruited—do contain a preponderating number of men who have been trained on definite Church lines and give their battalions a distinctly religious atmosphere.

But, after full allowance has been made for all these exceptions, it still remains true that the great majority of men in the Army cannot be said to be in any sense closely connected with any branch of organised Christianity, or really interested in the propositions or problems of the Faith. And it is here that it would seem to be profitable to consider how far this state of things may be traced to and explained by conditions existent before the war.

The present writer is convinced that increased powers of observation are now only making clear results that have been in existence for some time past, and are directly attributable to inefficiency, partly perhaps

unavoidable inefficiency, in the system of religious education as prevalent in the Church at home. It will be useful to our purpose to consider as briefly as possible the circumstances under which this education is normally given and received.

To take first the case of those classes from which the men serving in the ranks are for the most part drawn. For them, opportunities of religious education are to be found in elementary and Sunday schools. But with the former we are not so much concerned, as they are not always under the direct control of Church authorities. It is rather in the Sunday schools that the Church, as a Church, exercises her functions as a teacher, and it is these that we propose to consider.

It is a matter of experience that in practically all parishes in England boys from the age of, say, eight to the age of fifteen or sixteen are definitely encouraged by their parents, even by those who would never think of coming to church themselves, to attend Sunday school with considerable regularity. This attitude of the parent is worthy of careful consideration, as it is very germane to the whole question that we are discussing. It is apparently dictated by two considerations. First, there is the vague but quite genuine feeling that their children should have at least the opportunity of learning something about religion. Being either unwilling or unable to undertake this instruction themselves, they salve their conscience by handing them over to the parochial clergy. And, secondly, there is an equally strong though less altruistic motive to be found in the fact that the parents know that with the children safe in Sunday school they can rely on having at least

part of Sunday afternoon peacefully free from the duty of parental supervision. This latter consideration the writer believes to be seriously important from the point of view of religious education, and to be often minimised or left out of sight. Concrete experience has taught many parochial clergy that an intimation to the parents of any particularly riotous Sunday-school scholars that their sons will be excluded from the school unless their behaviour improves leads almost invariably to parental intervention and a marked change for the better.

At the age of fifteen or sixteen boys generally leave Sunday school. The next stage in a well-organised parish is the lads' class, leading up to Confirmation. But there is undoubtedly a very serious leakage in numbers between the Sunday school and the Confirmation class; and of those who do present themselves for Confirmation a comparatively small percentage will be found five years afterwards to have remained active and communicant members of the Church.

The psychology of this seems fairly clear. The boy of sixteen will be leaving his school-days behind and beginning very probably to take rank in his family circle as a wage-earner and a man. He is also getting new experiences of life and making a fresh circle of friends whom he wishes to cultivate. As he is working all the week, Sunday afternoon is the obvious, if not the only, time for doing this; and for spending Sunday afternoon in this way he has the example of the majority of the men among whom he now mixes as a fellow-workman.

If there are, as is most probable, lads' classes in his parish, attendance at these entails a more definite act

of choice and resolution on his part, in the absence of the "parental stimulus" which largely dictated his attendance at Sunday school; and while he is debating the question other interests crowd in upon him at this most impressionable period of his life, and in many cases the regular course of religious instruction is broken off and never resumed.

One other point may be noted in this connection before we leave the question of the Sunday schools. The parental influence that we have discussed above undoubtedly makes attendance at Sunday school on the part of the children semi-compulsory; and this feeling, even if not very explicit in their minds, is certainly a contributory cause to the reluctance shown by many old Sunday-school scholars to continue their religious instruction when they have passed the Sunday-school age. The corrective to this may be found in increased efforts to make the Sunday school more attractive. It must be remembered that boys attending the elementary schools during the week are constantly being called upon to learn, and to answer questions on what they have learned, and if too much stress is laid in Sunday school on the duty of learning lessons, such as, for instance, the repetition of Collects and short passages of Scripture, it is very difficult to dissociate this side of Sunday-school instruction, in their minds, from the burdensome process that is so large a part of the routine of weekdays. The ideal that should be aimed at is, in the writer's opinion, the creation of a feeling that attendance at Sunday school is not so much a necessary duty as a privilege and a real pleasure. If this atmosphere can only be made,

and retained, we shall have done much to neutralise the otherwise inevitable reaction that is so often observable in boys who cease attendance at Sunday school, and they will be far more ready and willing to fall naturally into the scheme of further instruction that is provided for them in the majority of parishes.

We are concerned primarily with the task of tracing the reasons for the lack of interest in religious matters which is observable in the Army, not with suggesting remedies ; but it does seem clear, in the light of what the war has taught us, that the question of the continuity through adolescence of some form of religious education will have to be faced and solved by the Church, if she is to regain her hold upon the men of the nation. The writer would like to record his personal opinion that a solution may possibly be found on the lines of far greater co-operation on the part of the laity. A clergyman's Sunday is not infinitely elastic, and Sunday is really the only day on which classes can be carried on with consistency and success. Under present conditions at home the clergy are far too much occupied with their work in Sunday schools, a large proportion of which in some cases is of the nature of disciplinary supervision. It ought to be possible to hand over Sunday schools almost entirely to lay control and free the clergy for what the writer believes is the far more important and urgently needed work of educating and moulding the thoughts of our young men from the time at which they cease attendance at Sunday schools.

In the case of the young officers, we seem to find a somewhat different process that leads eventually to much the same attitude of lack of interest in religious

matters. A large though diminishing number of our officers are recruited from men who have spent some time at one of our English public schools ; and it is to these schools and the religious education there obtained that we must look if we are to estimate the reasons for the attitude towards religion that is very largely adopted by boys of the " public school " class. Practically every public school has a system of compulsory chapel attendance on Sundays and also on weekdays. These services are regular and inevitable, and while to some boys who attend them they are welcome and genuinely helpful, there is no doubt that by very many they are regarded subconsciously as part of the school routine. There is a tendency, which, if not corrected, may become a habit, to look on Sunday chapel especially as very much similar to any other part of the inevitable school routine, and even as a burden that may be borne in patience in the knowledge that the end of school-days will bring freedom from this as from other restrictions upon individual choice and liberty of action. The corrective, obviously, for this attitude is the stimulation, by means of sympathetic instruction, of an intelligent interest in religion for its own sake apart from school discipline. And it is in this particular that, in the writer's opinion, the average public school system most lamentably fails. Except for occasional sermons in the school chapel, and with the other exception that will be mentioned later, there is in most schools literally no systematic attempt to point out the application of individual belief in God to the ordinary needs and temptations of daily life. There is no lack, let it be clearly understood, of sym-

pathy and help for the younger members of the school. There are few public school boys who can look back upon the old days without grateful remembrance of advice from a housemaster or an older schoolfellow, that has in many cases been of the utmost benefit to them. But the point is that such help and advice are occasional, and moreover not necessarily connected with religious belief at all ; indeed in many cases, owing to the habitual reserve of schoolboys, advice or help given to a schoolfellow is studiously dissociated by the giver from any suggestion of definitely religious motive.

The one exception, mentioned in passing above, is the period when boys at a public school are prepared for Confirmation. At such times personal religion is taught, and almost always with great care and thoroughness. But, it must be frankly stated, even Confirmation is in many cases robbed of some part of its compelling power as an epoch in a boy's life by its general acceptance in the public opinion as a normal event in every boy's school career when he reaches a certain age or a certain standing in the school. In many schools Confirmation is so firmly established as usual at a certain age that although no pressure is brought to bear upon individuals, still a boy of Confirmation age does, without perhaps exactly realising his own process of thought, feel himself called upon to show cause why he should not be confirmed. This attitude towards Confirmation can, of course, do nothing to affect the potential value of the rite to a boy's individual life ; but it certainly does affect the attitude adopted by a house or a school towards religion in general.

It is, in the writer's opinion, the inevitability and, in some cases, the monotony of public worship during school-days, combined with the absence of the corrective of simultaneous and real religious education, that account for the very large number of old public school boys who, when they leave school, are not predisposed to be regular or enthusiastic in their attendance at church. The writer would like to say in this connection that he has no desire to pose as a critic or as a reformer of our public school system, but that he has during the past few months taken every opportunity of discussing this very question with thoughtful men from a number of different public schools, and that he has found his own opinion corroborated and put in many cases even more strongly than he has put it in the preceding pages. And it may be worth mentioning as subsidiary evidence that during eight years' experience in a college at Cambridge he has found that, when he has asked men the reason for the irregularity of their attendance at the college chapel, the answer has been given with perfect frankness by nine out of every ten undergraduates, that "they had had enough compulsory church at school, and thought that when they came to the university they might be allowed to think about religion for themselves." The public schools are a glory and an asset in our national life, and public school boys have shown us during the last three years that, like their brothers in the ranks, they know how to die ; but it is not so certain that they have grasped in its fullest meaning what Christ would have them know as to how to live.

II.

As the old professional Army became, after the first few months of war, increasingly leavened with the citizen element, so a situation arose of compelling interest for all who had eyes to see. The majority of men serving as officers or in the ranks were, before the war, admittedly out of close touch with the teaching of the Church and with the individual clergy ; and they were now introduced to a system that included regular and compulsory attendance at Church services, and also close and daily association with chaplains drawn from the ranks of the clergy at home. When the religious history of England in the early part of the twentieth century can be seen in clearer perspective, it is certain that this situation and the consequences that followed from it will be seen to have been of the most crucial importance. It would be intensely interesting to follow out these results in some of their aspects ; to estimate the attitude of officers and men towards church parade, and show how it was, in many cases, insensibly modified by increasing friendship between the chaplains and the congregation ; or to discuss how much of this change has been due to the introduction of voluntary services as well as the parade service ; or again to show how a good-natured but indifferent tolerance of the " padre " and the things for which he stood changed so often into a real affection for the man who had been with them in the trenches and possibly pulled them in from No Man's Land when they were

wounded; or, lastly, to consider how far the large voluntary services that are normal in many regiments are to be attributed to personal regard for the chaplain who conducts them, or to genuinely increasing desire to learn more about God and religion. It is in the examination of problems such as these, and in the answers that a fearless and unbiassed inquiry will produce, that real guidance will be found for the work of the Church after the war. But the limits of this Essay preclude such a wide inquiry; we must confine ourselves to an attempt to analyse as far as possible the content of the soldier's religious attitude, bearing in mind that this attitude is the product of divergent forces, which include both the memories and influence of home life in England and lessons which he may have learned from his experience in France.

With regard then, first of all, to what we may call organised religion, it must be frankly admitted that the average soldier is *not* conscious of any allegiance due from him to the authority or the teaching of the Church. One simple but convincing proof of this may be found in the small number of communicants who may be expected even on such occasions as Easter and Christmas Day. With possible reasons for this state of affairs we have already dealt at length when considering the teaching methods of the Church in pre-war days, and we need not return to that subject. In close connection with his lack of education in religious matters is the soldier's attitude towards God. He does believe in the existence of God. No one can be called upon to work among wounded men in an ambulance or casualty clearing station without being

struck by this almost universal fact. But his belief in God is in a state of arrested development. It might almost be said that it stops short at the Sunday-school stage. God, to a very great number of men, is an abstraction, a vague "One above." What is really lacking is a grasp of the Christian view of God as proclaimed in the Incarnation, the God who took on Him our human nature and is now and for ever Man, and the Friend of man: and conversely it is just this view of Christ, suffering as a man for men and so the Saviour of man, that, when taught in Confirmation classes, produces, once it is realised, such profound and lasting impressions on the minds of men who are themselves suffering for the sake of others.

But this is merely the negative side of the case. What is equally true and far more striking is the fact that the war itself has fostered in the lives of the vast majority of men qualities that are, to say the least, potentially Christian. The paradox appears, that in the hard school of reality men are finding true lessons which it is the peculiar duty of the Church to foster, and which they were either unwilling or unable to learn from the Church before the war. The elementary principles of Army life, self-surrender to a cause, self-subordination in the interests of a common purpose, regular and disciplined habits, are but the Christian virtues represented with a particular application. The soldier is not a saint. He is just as weak and susceptible to temptation as he was in civil life; and it is unwise and unfair to flatter him. But in spite of this he is a man in many ways entirely admirable. Deep down in the hearts even of those who are

superficially the most careless is a sense of vocation : life is purposeful, and through all the mist of disillusionment and weariness the soldier perhaps remembers that he came forward voluntarily to fight for a cause because he believed that this cause was right, and that it was his duty to see that right conquered wrong. It is this sense of "vocation" that, however dimly realised, explains the miracle that we call the New Armies. And with the sense of vocation come inevitably the loyalty to the cause and the spirit of brotherhood that are the special marks of the British soldier of to-day.

We have called these qualities potentially Christian. But can we dignify them with the actual name of religion ? And if we cannot, does it follow that the soldier has no real religion at all ? The present writer would not be a party to any such pessimistic conclusion. What does seem quite clear is that the religion of the majority of men in the Army is unconscious. It is a creed of conduct, more or less divorced from theological presuppositions. But the statement that religion is unconscious does not carry with it the corollary that it is non-existent. The soldier of to-day is religious ; but his religious inclinations have not been sufficiently directed into the channels through which they would have found conscious and increasing expression. For this reason, among others, we are faced with the fact that for very many men war has taught them more about the ideals of the Kingdom of God than they have learned from definitely religious agencies.

The realisation of this fact is the bounden duty of the Church ; and the fact, when realised, the most tremendous challenge that the war calls upon her to face.

III.

How is this challenge to be met ? The writer ventures to offer some suggestions, not because he wishes to set up his own fallible judgment as a guide for others of greater wisdom and experience, but because this Essay would be incomplete unless some such suggestions formed part of it.

First and foremost, as the National Mission so clearly proclaimed, there comes to the Church, insistently, the call to self-examination and self-knowledge. The Church has, to a large extent, failed in this generation, and this failure has been made clear by the war. The Army might have taken with it to France the conscious stimulus and consecration of the blessing of the Mother Church. It did not do so because the Church lacked the authority and influence to impress this message on the hearts of her individual children. And with the realisation of failure will assuredly come repentance—a turning to the Master Teacher to find out in what her failure lay—and an effort to live more closely in communion with Him that His will may be done more faithfully and more effectually.

And conditioned by this paramount duty, two thoughts suggest themselves which may be summarised each in one word—education, and co-operation.

The laity must be religiously educated. With one aspect of this question we have already dealt, and it will only be necessary to repeat our conclusion. Means must be found generally, as they are now in

some parishes, of preventing the drifting away of so many boys who leave Sunday school from further continuous religious instruction. But there is another aspect, and this is the more immediately urgent one. The Church has an unparalleled opportunity at the present moment, in the mass of unconscious Christianity, as we have called it, that our men will bring back with them from France. It is true that they have learnt this for the most part independently of the Church and her teaching. This we must frankly admit; but even the more for this reason the call comes to the Church to mould this unconscious but splendid material into an articulate and conscious faith. How is this to be done? How is Christ to be shown forth as the real though hitherto unacknowledged King of all the aspirations and the self-sacrifice that the war has kindled in men's hearts? Simply, as He was shown forth in the first great Mission on the banks of the Jordan, by the preaching of the Kingdom of God. It is the Kingdom, and the cause of the Kingdom, that is so little understood by the men in the Army, and which when proclaimed to them makes so compelling and illuminating an appeal. The writer had the privilege of a discussion on religious matters with the officers of a Brigade, and walking back from the meeting said half-jokingly to a subaltern, "I believe you fellows think that all we clergy care about is getting you inside our churches"—to which at once the answer was given, "Well, Padre, is not that so?" The present moment is the Church's opportunity of teaching men that the message of the Kingdom of God does not stop short at churchgoing, but includes social and inter-

national righteousness, and an intelligent interest in the life of the nation as a whole. It may be the fault of the Church, or it may not be, but the majority of men have never realised this fundamental fact. If only the Church can translate the Atonement into the language of to-day, and show the men who have lived in the trenches of Flanders, and seen their comrades lay down their lives, that the cause that they have fought for is part of the crusade that the Church was founded to conduct on earth, that their self-sacrifice is a shadow of the Sacrifice of Calvary, then all that they have found to be true in life will be swallowed up and consummated in the vision of God, and of the spiritual war that He is ever waging against the powers of evil. Their unconscious Christianity will be articulate and alive, and, as has been finely said, God will by a legitimist revolution come into His own.

But if this is so, we must educate the clergy. The Church has through her work at the Front made it more probable than ever before that men will be inclined to listen to her voice during the process of social reconstruction that must inevitably follow the war. And this opportunity, if it is to be properly used, will call for clear thinking, we may almost say for real statesmanship, not only on the part of the leaders of the Church, but also of her junior representatives. For this call the clergy must be prepared, devotionally and intellectually; and in this connection it is pertinent to consider briefly the question of the training of our candidates for Holy Orders. The present writer feels bound to record his opinion, in all diffidence, that at present there are not sufficient guarantees

that this training is in any way adequate. As a small concrete illustration, the qualifications generally required from candidates who present themselves from one of our universities are—

(*a*) that they should have obtained the B.A. degree ;

(*b*) that they should have been for one year resident in a recognised theological college, or have attended two courses of theological lectures at their university.

With the loophole thus afforded by the latter alternative, it is quite possible for a student to spend two years at his university without any thoughts of Holy Orders, and, having managed during his third year to spare twenty-four hurried hours of the time that he would otherwise give to the subjects that he is studying for his degree (possibly science or mathematics) in a theological lecture-room, to present himself theoretically as fully qualified a candidate for Holy Orders as a man who has had one year or more of specialised training in a theological college. The minimum qualifications for admission to Holy Orders in our Church compare most unfavourably with those required in other Churches, or in other callings, such as the medical profession. With the tremendous calls that, God willing, the nation may feel moved to make on its clergy in the way of advice and guidance, it seems at least possible that the sound policy would be to ensure a higher level of specialised training even at the cost of a diminution in numbers.

Again, there must be co-operation, both within the Church and outside it. The Missionary problem is one that cannot be discussed in a few paragraphs. But two or three points may be noticed, if only sum-

marily. It is surely time that the Church, to borrow a current metaphor, paid some serious attention to the question of her man-power ; and this can only be done by the breaking down once and for all of the unreal distinction between the " Home " and the " Mission " field. It would be to the lasting good of the Church if service abroad was made normal and not, as at present, abnormal ; and if every candidate for Holy Orders was informed as a matter of course that he would be normally expected to serve a certain number of the first ten years of his priesthood overseas. With a more or less regular annual succession of clergy due for foreign work, it would be possible by means of a central authority established for the purpose to allocate reinforcements to areas where they were most needed. And the effect upon the Home Church of having a body of clergy the majority of whom had had experience of work in other continents would be one of immeasurable benefit. The nation that sends its working men to conquer Baghdad and defend the Suez Canal has learnt to think imperially ; and the Church that is to hold its allegiance must think imperially too. To this suggestion, and to the arguments for and against its practicability, justice cannot be done in this Essay ; but it is one that merits immediate and very serious consideration.

Again, we must co-operate with the laity. The special instance of Sunday schools, discussed above, is only one of many aspects of this question. If one great lesson that we must teach our people is the meaning of the Kingdom of God, another, and almost equally vital, is the real meaning of the priesthood of

the laity. Without any doubt part of the lack of interest shown by laymen in the affairs of the Church is directly attributable to the fact that they have not been sufficiently instructed in their duties or encouraged to perform them. There is visible at the moment in England a considerable movement in the direction of giving laymen a larger representation and a more influential voice on Church councils of different kinds, and this tendency makes entirely for good. There are many directions in which the laity could, and ought to, relieve or assist the clergy in the ordinary routine work of the Church ; for instance, as is in fact increasingly found to be the case, in the matter of finance. And this deliberate broadening of the basis of Church opinion must be wholehearted and without reserve on the part of the clergy. On many questions laymen keenly interested in the Church have pronounced and helpful views, and they must be encouraged to give voice to them, even at the risk that in some cases their criticisms and suggestions may seem revolutionary or even possibly give offence. In any Church, and especially such a Church as ours, which is accused, often quite unfairly, of undue conservatism, criticism from within would be a healthy and sure proof of its vitality. Laymen who are entirely faithful to the Church are at times inclined to criticise certain features of the administrative methods of the Church, as for instance the unequal distribution of emoluments, the methods adopted in some cases for raising money, the absence of any adequate and compulsory superannuation scheme that will enable a clergyman to retire in season and not continue to hold a benefice

when he is really incapacitated by age or infirmity for the discharge of his duties. These criticisms are made in all honesty, and it would be folly to pretend that they are not made. The remedy seems obviously to be that the laity should be encouraged more than they are at present to realise their duty of criticism where criticism is needed, and of effectual co-operation in the task of introducing necessary reforms.

And we must co-operate with other Churches. This seems to the writer to be almost the dominant lesson of the war. Very many of our men have had their faith in God burned into them in the hard school of reality. They have found God because they felt the need for Him ; and for them He is the great principle of love and unity. They will have simply no use for any Church that formulates religion in terms of division ; and if they find that membership of any religious body in which they wish to consecrate and make effective the faith that has become theirs brings with it the necessary consequence of suspicion of and competition with other bodies, they will keep their faith to themselves, and the Church will have lost their allegiance, perhaps for ever. It is by no means meant that differences are to be minimised, or the peculiar heritage of the Church abrogated or surrendered, but what is meant is that, in the great battle that will have to be fought for the Kingdom of God, it will be courting failure if forces are dissipated by competition or unwillingness to co-operate as far as possible. If there cannot be unity, there must at least be uniformity of aim and a *liaison* as close and sympathetic as that of allied armies in the field. It is no doubt more easy

to formulate this ideal than to see how it can be achieved; but that it must be achieved is certain if the Church is to fulfil her commission, and the methods to be adopted may well be left to the deliberation of the collective wisdom of the Church.

IV.

The task of analysing the religious attitude of the soldiers of the Army, and of suggesting lines on which the Church may be better enabled to cope with the problems that lie before her in her dealing with them, is one of extraordinary difficulty, and no one can be more conscious than the present writer of the imperfect and fragmentary way in which it has been attempted. Many aspects of the problem have had perforce to be omitted, others very cursorily treated. But it may perhaps be useful if the conclusions that have been arrived at are presented once more in a summary form.

It would seem that the mobilisation of a large section of the young men of England has made it clear that the Church has not succeeded in impressing upon the majority of them a sense of allegiance to her teaching and practices. The reason for this failure may largely be found in the weakness of her system of religious education, and this is worthy of the most serious reflection. At the same time there is observable in the Army a considerable amount of potential Christianity, of qualities, that is to say, which are closely akin to the very virtues that the Church has always proclaimed as of the essence of the teaching of Christ.

And so to the Church is given the wonderful opportunity of claiming these superb qualities, fostered by the circumstances of war, not for herself alone or for her own glory, but for the service of the Kingdom of God—of making them consciously Christian, and relating them to the knowledge and worship of a personal Christ. To enable her to achieve this end, three things appear to be especially necessary—self-examination, education, and co-operation. The self-examination that leads to repentance, and through repentance to a deepened faith in God and a more abiding hope for the future; the education of clergy and laity alike; and the broadening of the basis of Church work and Church thought until the Church becomes, as she should be, a world-wide brotherhood on the interest and support of which the cause of Christ in all parts of the world has an equal claim, and in which clergy and laity bear each of them their due share of work and responsibility.

One looks into the future. God grant that in twenty years from now it may be said that the coming of the Great Shadow over Europe, that has darkened the doors of so many of our homes, marked also the dawn of a new day in the history of our country, and that in and through the Church of our fathers, quickened and instinct afresh with the Holy Spirit, men who had dared all for England caught the vision of an even nobler cause, and learnt the abiding lesson that the greatest of all battles that can be fought is for Christ and the Kingdom of God.

XV

THE RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTIES OF THE PRIVATE SOLDIER

BY THE

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XV

THE RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTIES OF THE PRIVATE SOLDIER

I. War.

"He has not got any," said my friend the Anglo-Catholic, "you are doing what everyone else is doing now, reading into the soldier what you find in yourself. We all think he wants what we want him to want, and is short of what we can supply. Everyone thinks he possesses the panacea for all religious diseases. You think he wants thought because you are a thinker. In reality the private soldier does not think. He is either simply and splendidly religious or else purely indifferent. What he needs is definite dogmatic teaching on the full Catholic Faith. His difficulties are not intellectual but moral." An exactly similar reply was given by an earnest evangelical, only that he prescribed simple Gospel teaching and more powerful preaching of conversion.

I am sure that both replies contain truth, but I believe that neither contains the whole truth. The term "private soldier" is dangerous. Classification

of human beings is always perilous, and this particular classification is specially so. The very deceptive uniformity of the khaki hides an endless diversity of body, mind, and spirit. All the brains of the British Army are not crowned by red hats or even by officers' caps. There are among the private soldiers of the present day many who do think, and think deeply.

Moreover, if the soldier's difficulties are always moral, and never intellectual, why are not all the cleanest and best of them Christians ? One can understand the indifference of men who are evidently careless and slack in their lives, but why is not the best N.C.O. in the battalion a Christian ? Why are the men whose courage, good comradeship, gallantry and cheerfulness we are bound to admire indifferent to Christianity ? That is the question that all of us ask ourselves.

And there is another aspect of it. It is impossible to be sure that all the indifference which is accompanied by moral slackness is due altogether to moral causes. I am convinced that a great deal of what we class as moral indifference, and a great deal of the indifference among decent, clean men, is due to religious difficulties which give rise to positive unbelief. There is in the Army of to-day a great deal of agnosticism disguised as indifference.

Sometimes they can formulate and express their difficulties, sometimes they can formulate but not express them, and sometimes they can neither formulate nor express but only feel them.

The man who can formulate and express his difficulty will come to you with a question or an objection. He

is comparatively rarer but by no means non-existent in the Army. The man who can formulate but not express his difficulty will listen with eager attention to any teaching which appears to touch and grapple with it, but will exhibit impatience with or contempt for dogmatic teaching which ignores or hedges about it. The man who can neither formulate nor express but merely feel his difficulty, is the indifferent man proper, and is the great problem. It is difficult to get him to listen to any teaching because he has to be roused to an effort in order to think consecutively.

It is not accurate to say that he does not think at all. His thought is there, but it is subconscious and chaotic. It is easy to say that he does not think he feels, but this absolute separation of the emotions from the intellect is a purely abstract process useful for purposes of psychological analysis, but misleading if pressed too far. There is in reality no such thing as thought without feeling or feeling without thought. Pure emotion and pure intellect are both alike abstractions of reality. The recognition of an unexplained contradiction is a feeling of irritation, and the solution of it a feeling of relief ; but a man who sees a contradiction and feels irritated by it does not always try to solve it, he will often forget or try to forget it. The contradiction hurts, but he does not try to heal the hurt, he takes a narcotic instead. The trained thinker who meets a contradiction sets to work to solve it, and takes to thought ; the ordinary man despairs of solving it, and takes to drink, or cards, or the cinema, or writing to his best girl, or cursing the sergeant-major—takes to anything, in fact, which

will save him from thought. But all the time the contradiction is there, a dull, aching pain, the toothache of the soul. Such a man does not declare himself agnostic; he simply lights a "fag," and says that it is a "durned queer business," and that he is "d——d if he knows what to make of it."

When the contradiction hurts very badly, such a man will blaspheme, and his blasphemy will burn round one side of the contradiction. I remember a man who came down a communication trench during a severe bombardment in the great Somme offensive and met me there, looking after the wounded, and as soon as he saw I was a parson poured out the most thrilling blasphemies against God, Jesus Christ, Christianity and parsons. I knew it was not personal, it was merely that the contradiction of Christ and Herr Krupp was twisting his inside, and he was endeavouring to break it down with linguistic high explosives. All blasphemy implies a kind of belief. If you doubt that, sit down and try to blaspheme Zeus or Odin; you will find it as insipid as kissing an angular maiden aunt.

The root of the soldier's blasphemy is the same as that of his humour, and that is why they are so often mixed. They are both efforts to solve a felt but unformulated contradiction in life, and they are both essentially Christian, the signs of a lost sheep of the Good Shepherd.

This is important because humour and blasphemy form an enormous factor in the general atmosphere in which the soldier lives. A great deal of his humour is blasphemous. A friend of mine who was

a churchwarden at home, and met me one night in the line, swelled out to twice his usual stoutness with bombs, and declared that this was a "——— funny job for a churchwarden," was a case in point.

Blasphemy and blasphemous humour are both common at the Front because the Front is one vast contradiction.

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, and a trench mortar has just blown my pal, who was a good-living lad, to pieces, and God is Love, and they crucified the sergeant-major, and peace on the earth, good will towards man, and I stuck my bayonet through his belly, and Jesus died to save us from sin, and the Boche has been raping women, and this ——— war never ends" (note the ———, it is important and would probably be considerably amplified). "Christ, there's the ——— tea up; where's my ——— dixie?"

I have never heard that said because it never was said, but I have heard what was the expression of it hundreds of times, and in a vision I have seen the tears stand bright in Jesus' eyes, and heard Him laugh the grand loving laughter of God.

If the dear old chaps who said it could have seen Him they would have laughed with Him, and would have said, "Sorry, sir, I did not really mean it. As you were, and we will carry on." Why cannot they see Him? Because of the contradiction. The first great difficulty of the private soldier is war.

"Why does not God stop it? Any decent man would stop it to-morrow if he could, and God is Almighty and can do anything, then why does He allow it to go on?"

It is, of course, the old problem of evil in an acute form, and there is no complete and logically perfect solution of it. But can nothing be done to mitigate the mystery of it? Some would reply that in this final mystery reason has no part to play, it is the sphere of faith. Faith in God, and Faith alone, can pierce without dissolving the contradiction and find God good behind. It is, of course, undeniable that Faith has done this again and again, but we must beware how we play off faith against reason. Faith is super- but not contra-rational. It does not bid us cease from thinking, but rather bids us think the more, strong in faith that there is reason in the ways of God with men, and that God's mysteries are mysteries of the unknown but not of the unknowable. Faith is a food and a stimulant and not a narcotic. It is meant to quicken, not to kill, the power of thought. I do not think it is right to tell men that they must not think about this question, and it certainly is perfectly useless to tell them, because they will not obey.

What do you mean by the word "Almighty" as an attribute of God? It rolls off our tongues in our creeds and prayers and sermons very easily and glibly, but what does it mean?

Everyone ought to read Mr. H. G. Wells's great novel, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through." It is a gallant and illuminating attempt to state the question, and to answer it. His thought has brought him to a very real and living faith in God revealed in Jesus Christ, and has also brought relief to many troubled minds among the officers of the British Army. I know that

from conversations I have had. I have met the book everywhere in the trenches. As yet it has not largely reached the private soldier.

But I am sure that no one, not even Mr. Wells himself, having thought so far could stop there. "After all," says Mr. Wells, "the real God of the Christians is Christ not God Almighty ; a poor, mocked, and wounded Christ nailed on a cross of matter . . . Some day He will triumph." However strange that may sound to Christian ears, there is a lot of truth in it. The centre of our worship has always been Christ and Him Crucified. We have always worshipped a suffering God.

> See from His head, His hands, His feet,
> Sorrow and Love flow mingled down.
> Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
> Or thorns compose so rich a crown ?
>
> Were the whole realm of nature mine,
> That were an offering far too small.
> Love so amazing, so divine,
> Demands my soul, my life, my all.

That is about as good a summary of the root of Christian devotion as one could get. But what Mr. Wells, who is not yet a fully conscious Christian, fails to grasp is that we cannot think of the Cross apart from the Resurrection.

The Gospel of the Cross without the Resurrection would be a Gospel of despair, the revelation of a powerless, pain-racked Deity caught in the grip of creation and held fast. The Gospel of Christ is a Gospel of Hope, a Gospel of all-suffering but all-conquering love faced with an awful and inevitable agony, but patiently

and powerfully overcoming it. It is the Gospel of a transcendent God Who makes Himself immanent for Love's sake, and thereby takes upon Himself a burden and an agony beyond our power to understand. The attribute Almighty must be interpreted in the light of the Cross and the Resurrection, and in that light it is seen to mean, not that God has no difficulties and no sorrows, but that God is able to overcome all difficulties and to rise supreme above all sorrows. Omnipotence does not mean that God can do anything which we imagine He ought to be able to do, but that, faced with awful obstacles and humanly incomprehensible difficulties, He is nevertheless able to grapple with and overcome them. God is πατὴρ παντοκράτωρ. This revelation of God in Christ is the revelation which the story of the growth of the universe as it is laid before us in science and in history would lead us to expect.

As one reads the amazing story of development which evolutionary science has to tell, one seems to catch a glimpse of that ever-struggling but ever-conquering power Who works unceasingly behind it all. We see Him struggling, but victoriously struggling, to bring order and beauty out of chaos. The Spirit of God is seen at war with necessity. We must call it that for lack of a better name. The Catholic Faith simply calls it Satan, the adversary, and puts its origin in the misuse of free will by spirit created before the world was. This is not a solution but a postponement of the problem. But the adversary is there, in nature as in man.

As one reads the story of science and the struggle

of nature towards perfection, one sees staring up through the pages of the text-book the face of Christ patient, pain-pierced, and powerful.

> So through the thunder sounds a human voice
> Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here for thee;
> Face my hands fashioned, see it in myself.
> Thou hast no power, nor canst conceive of mine.
> But Love I gave thee, with Myself to love,
> And thou must love Me, Who have died for thee."

It is not for nothing that Spring and Easter coincide. A perfect spring day in a smiling land is the victory of God over necessity in nature, as the Resurrection is the victory of God over necessity in man. It is not mere poetry but truth to say that the summer rose is dyed red with the life-blood of God. All good things are the product, not only of God's love and power, but also of His pain. The raiment of the lily was not bought for nothing any more than is the raiment of the saints. With the dawn of history the struggle of God becomes more intense. The pressure of necessity becomes more powerful. History cries out for that prone figure in the Garden sweating great drops of blood, and demands for its interpretation the Cross of Calvary.

> . . . . . "History's pages but record
> One death grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the word.
> Right for ever on the scaffold, wrong for ever on the throne,
> Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
> Standeth God, within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

No better summary of history could be found than those great lines of Lowell's. To meet the difficulty of war honestly, we have to face the facts not only of this war but of history's thousand wars, and all

the cruelty, barbarity, and sin that they have produced. Belgium is but the latest of a thousand lands that have had to weep for their children and refuse to be comforted because they were not. Man's history is one long bloody war, with burning homes, dishonoured women, tortured children, and all war's usual atrocities repeated like a filthy tale. That fact must be faced, and Christianity faces it in the tortured figure of God incarnate in Whom all history is summed up. History is an intolerable enigma without the Cross of Christ. But again the Cross without the empty Tomb fails to fit the facts. There is an agony of God in history, but again I would stress the truth that it is a victorious agony. There is progress in history, there is a real development of man, a real development of the individual and of society toward perfection. The Kingdom of God is really coming and has been coming all down the ages. It is on this point that Mr. Wells falls short in his teaching. He does not do justice to the Victory of God. He has temporally swung back to the opposite extreme from the theologians and has allowed the mystery of evil to obscure the mystery of good. Necessity is not really uttermost or ultimate, it is essentially temporary and contingent; it will pass away, and God will be supreme. All this is latent in Mr. Wells's teaching, latent but not yet patent, and it needs to be patent and emphatic. There is no Gospel apart from the Resurrection. "The world is cruel," Mr. Britling's Letty says. "It is just cruel. So it always will be." "It need not be cruel," replies Mr. Britling, and in that great reply is all the latent power of the Christian Faith. It need not

be, it must not be, it shall not be. This is that which overcometh the world, even our faith. "I believe in God the Father Almighty," is an act of faith, not a declaration of demonstrated fact. It is the Christian soldier's declaration of entire trust in the striving, struggling, but insuperable Person who works without and within the universe. It is the Christian Army's oath of allegiance, and its battle-cry. It is said standing to attention with our faces turned towards God's altar and the dawn of day whence comes the final victory of Light.

Too often in the past this first clause of our Creed has been interpreted and preached in such a way as to force men to lay upon God the responsibility for evil as though it were in some mysterious way His Will. God has been represented as sending and willing plague, pestilence, famine, disease and war. All these have been represented as the visitation of God. This has led to a very popular fatalism which is a pernicious travesty of Christian Truth. Fatalism and agnosticism are man's chief enemies, they cause more sin than drink and selfishness. It is this fatalistic Christianity which has no appeal to men, and it is, often through our bad preaching and teaching, and their consequent ignorance, the only Christianity they know. Christian preaching has very often consisted in pious attempts to make evil good in order to save God's face. We have suffered from what Hilary of Poitiers called "irreligiosa sollicitudo pro Deo," and have been orthodox liars to the glory of God. Passive resignation to evil as though it were God's will has been exalted into a virtue, and consequently the

Christianity which should have turned the world upside down has been turned into a method of keeping it as it is and meekly accepting its wrong-side-upness as the discipline of Almighty God. The Revolutionary Christ has been disguised as a moral policeman. Our preaching of the Cross has been stultified in the same way. The murder of Good Friday has been separated from the other murders that stain man's history and represented as in some mysterious way the Will of God, part of God's plan. The spite and hatred of the priests, the treachery of Judas, the cowardice of Pilate, the brutality of the soldiers, the ingratitude of the crowd, part of God's plan, because God willed that Christ should die—what a God, and what a plan! When Christ cried in the Garden "Thy Will be done," He has been represented as submitting to the Cross as the Will of God, and as being a pattern of patient submission. What a travesty of Truth! God's Will was of course the perfect life, the perfect witness to the Truth; for this end was He born and for this end came He into the world. The cry in the Garden was an act, not so much of submission as of aspiration and tremendous resolve. Christianity is not the gospel of the bowed head but the gospel of the set teeth. "Thy Will be done" in the Garden was the supreme majesty of manhood which sent Christ's enemies reeling backwards to the ground, and is the revelation of that supreme majesty of Godhead which shall at last send all evil reeling backward into its native nothingness. "Thy Will be done" is not pathetic, it is powerful, with the power of the suffering but insuperable God.

Here I think is the teaching which will mitigate if it does not destroy the bitterness of the contradiction of Christ in War. We preach a suffering but insuperable God at war with evil in the world, at war with sin, disease and death, and at war with war.

We preach a God ever crucified by evil but ever rising above it, Christ crucified but risen from the dead. Evil is not and never can be the Will of God, it arises from necessities the nature of which we cannot fully understand.

What the necessities were which God had to overcome in the creation of the material world we cannot understand, because our knowledge of them is limited by our knowledge of the ultimate nature of matter, which is *nil*.

But our knowledge of the necessities arising in the evolution of man toward perfection is greater because they arise out of the nature of consciousness which is the only thing we know about from the inside, and these two necessities when fully realised meet many of the commonest difficulties in the soldier's mind.

II. Why does God allow Evil?

Even when you have made it clear that God does not will war, still He wants to know why God permits it. And we must answer because He cannot help it. Man must be free. An element of independence and spontaneity is an essential factor of personal consciousness. Man would not be man without freedom. The first necessity God had to meet in the creation of self-conscious personality was freedom.

God must leave us free to sin or else destroy us. Man cannot, absolutely cannot, be compelled to do right. There is no such thing as compulsory virtue.

III. Why does not God Punish the Right Man?

A soldier in hospital badly wounded, to whom I had explained the necessity of freedom, replied that he understood that man must be free to sin, and that sorrow must follow sin. "But what I can't see," he said, "is why God does not punish the right man. He does not. He seems to knock a wrong 'un every time. The Kaiser and his lot sin, and my old dad is breaking his heart because my brother has lost his legs. Now what sense or justice is there in that?" This is a question that worries soldiers as much as any, the apparent injustice of the suffering of the innocent. The reply seems to me to lie in the demonstration of the second necessity that God has to meet in the development of the human race, viz., the necessity of unity. Conscious personality must be in a measure independent, and cannot be completely isolated. A completely isolated human personality is an absolute impossibility. We are human, and we progress as human beings because we are one family, and share our evil and our good. Speech, writing, and the reason which invented and can use them are the hall marks of humanity, and they are the means of our unity. We share the good that others win, the product of their hands and brains, and so, and only so, do we progress. We reap in joy what others sow in

bitter tears, and garner into our treasury of blessings the fruit their labours bear. That is the very law of Love, the Love that makes us one. Rightly used, this power of unity is the greatest blessing we possess, it is the very source of all our highest joy. It is the source from which all knowledge comes. It is the meaning of the mystery of Music and Art. The music that sings in a great musician's brain, the glory of form and colour that burns in fire of ecstasy in the soul of the great artist, flow out to bless the brains and hearts of lesser men. This interpenetration is life, as Bergson has taught us.

But when by virtue of his freedom man uses his powers wrongly, the evil that he does, the vicious product of his hand and brain, flows out to curse the human family through those very channels which were meant to convey the highest blessings. These two necessary properties of freedom and unity when wrongly used make the suffering of the innocent for the guilty inevitable. That boy soldier's dad and the Kaiser are one in the unity of the human race, and so the evil results of Germany's wrong choice of ideals, her substitution of Mars for Christ, come upon him and upon his children, and they suffer, the innocent for the guilty.

IV. What is God Doing?

"He is out of it all," a man said to me. "Christ suffered once and once for all, and then ascended into Heaven to wait until the world comes round, and it seems a long time coming. Christ died once in pain

to save us from our sins, but it does not seem to have saved us much, when all this comes as the result of sin after two thousand years." This is a very real difficulty. There is no one for whom the soldier has such supreme contempt as a bad staff officer who wears red tabs and spurs and never sees the trenches. And to him that is how God appears. Christ was splendid while He was on earth, but He has gone into Heaven. He has retired to the security of Corps Headquarters well behind the line, and from there He directs operations. All the glory with which we invest the glorified Christ, the throne, the host of waiting angels, the triumphal entry into Heaven, all this means just "Red tabs and spurs," and they do not evoke worship or even respect. The pageantry of Courts and thrones which supplied past ages with the symbols wherein to express the glory of God has lost its glamour for the man of to-day, he is too deeply Christian. Only the Cross is eternal, it is the only real throne. The only crown the modern man respects is the Crown of Thorns.

A muddy, bloody, suffering but unbeaten Christ he can be made to love and follow, but a supreme, transcendent potentate is to him as contemptible as the Kaiser. We need to reinterpret the Resurrection and Ascension if they are to grip the mind of the soldier of to-day or the citizen of to-morrow. We are witnessing the passing of the monarch absolute from the world in a flood of blood and tears, and all the metaphors supplied from absolute monarchy must pass too. The Ascension needs to be connected with the coming of the Spirit, the coming of God to embark

upon another and more terrible course of victorious suffering in the Church and in humanity. God comes again in the Spirit to lead His army, and to suffer with it. God suffers now, and is crucified afresh every day. God suffers in every man that suffers. God, the God we love and worship, is no far off God of Power, but the comrade God of Love: He is on no far off heavenly throne, He is up in the trenches, under the guns: for every wound a man receives there is pain in the heart of God, and every cry of agony finds echo in God's soul. God is not a bad Staff Officer, but a gallant and fatherly Colonel who goes over the top with His men. God is leading the world at cost of awful agony to its perfection. The truth of the in-dwelling of the Spirit of Jesus Christ and the suffering of God in man must be the keystone of our preaching. The Church is God's army, in which He dwells and suffers, and we must preach the Church, and the call to its warfare under the leadership of God.

V. Why are there so many Religions?

But when we try to preach the call of the Army of God, we are immediately faced with the difficulty caused by our unhappy divisions. The soldier's point of view is that they are different religions, and he does not see the reason of or the necessity for them. The whole spectacle of the divided Church he regards with humorous contempt. It is only one of the many grievous losses which the Church suffers, and it is not my province either to demonstrate what

needs no demonstration, or to enter into a discussion on the methods of fostering unity. The point we have to get at is how to explain their existence to the ordinary man, and turn his contempt for the divided Church that appears on earth into loyal love of the undivided Church which exists in the hearts of all true followers of Christ. Again, I think we need to emphasise the two truths of human freedom and human unity, and to state that the army of Christ is wounded as the human race is wounded by man's misuse of both. The army of Christ is an army for ever in battle and it suffers from the power of evil without and from traitors within it. Our divisions are due to attacks from without and betrayal within. There are faults and sins on both sides, no Church, and no Church party, has a monopoly of truth or falsehood. All churches are but poor representatives of Christ at present. All we can do now is to cling fast, each one of us, to what we hold is true, and try to see our brother's point of view, and work for the unity which is to be. Meanwhile, let us grasp the fact that unity can exist behind divisions—witness the splendidly united yet sadly divided England for which we fight. A hundred parties, a continual, seething unrest, and yet a very real unity. So behind the divisions of the Church a very real unity in Christ exists. Perfect unity in England through the perfect unity of the Church is what we must work for, and meanwhile our most important lesson is to learn how to agree to differ and yet never be content with the agreement. Interdenominationalism is difficult, but in it lies the only possibility of solution.

VI. Why are there so many Hypocrites?

The divided Church finds its reflection in the divided man, or the hypocrite, as the "Man in the Street" calls him. There are in the world many real hypocrites, and they are as vile and as grievous to Christ now as when He cursed them in the Temple court; but they are not nearly so common as the man in the street or in the billets supposes. Most hypocrites are divided men, men who try and fail. He who tries to follow Christ must be prepared to fail, and try and fail again, and therefore to be charged with hypocrisy by his fellow men. This is what the soldier is not prepared for. He hates to think himself or to be thought by others to be a hypocrite. "I would not go to church if I could not act up to it," he says, and points to some weak brother who is a professing Christian, and perhaps a poor specimen. He is always hard in his judgments because, never having tried to live by the Christian standard, he does not know the difficulty of it, and he has only contempt for failure. He feels that he at any rate is honest, in that he professes nothing. This honesty of the lower standard is one of the commonest bars to the profession of Christianity. Now what we can point out to the soldier is that it is precisely this honesty of the lower standard that we are fighting against. The Germans openly declare that Christ has nothing to do with politics, and no place in international affairs; in these matters force is the only arbiter. War is inhuman, and therefore there can be no attempt to humanise war.

No nation has ever been purely Christian in its international policy, or in its method of conducting war, therefore all profession of Christianity in these matters is hypocrisy. And this charge of hypocrisy is one which Germany often makes against Britain and the Allies. The German is and always has been a purist, his motto is thorough. It is a great quality, but, like great qualities, is ghastly in its results when it is corrupt. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* The Prussian nightmare has displaced the German dream, and the perfect music of the "Moonlight Sonata" is drowned by the barking of the Kaiser's Krupps. Germany is honest, but it is the honesty of the lower standard, which is the honesty of hell. What this war must do if we are to win a real victory is to banish from Germany and from the world this lower honesty and put a decent striving hypocrisy in its place. If we cannot be human we must at any rate be as human as we can, and if war cannot be Christian we must make it as Christian as we can, until we abolish it. This refusal on the soldier's part to profess Christianity because he cannot be a perfect Christian is simply the honesty of the lower standard which is the enemy of progress. If man is to grow then he must aim higher than he can reach. There is nothing easier and nothing more fatal than to profess to be a blackguard and to be one.

VII. Repentance.

And that leads us on to another difficulty of the soldier connected with Christian Repentance. What is the use of repenting if we do the same things over

again? A man who does that must be a hypocrite. If he once repents of a thing he ought never to do it again. This lofty standard has much good in it, and as a standard it is the true one; but again he misses the point of repentance. To be sinless as Christ is the aim of the Christian life, and it is an aim so high that alone and unaided there is no hope at all that we shall ever reach it; it is only possible with the aid of God, and then only through much strife and struggle with the powers of evil. Conversion may be and often is instantaneous; sanctification is never so. Conversion is the vision of your Leader and your God in Christ, which may come like a flash of lightning blinding in its brightness, or may come gently growing like the dawn; but sanctification, which is the perfecting of our obedience to the heavenly vision, is always a gradual process, accomplished very often, like the incoming of the sea, by a series of advances followed by retrogression. It is in reality a growth in friendship with Christ. Often and often we will sin against Him, and there will come a cloud 'twixt us and Him, a cooling in our love for Him, because we know that we have something in us which He hates; then if our vision be a true one, we will come to Him, and lay the sin or sins before Him and ask to have the barrier broken and the friendship restored, and it will be restored through absolution; but it will come again, and probably come in somewhat the same way, for when men sin at all they sin along the weaker lines in their nature, and we will need to come again and again to have the cloud dispersed and peace between us and Christ our Leader restored. This is the

inevitable road to perfect friendship with so high and noble a friend as Christ, and in it there is nothing either of weakness, beyond the weakness of our humanity, or of hypocrisy. All this is common sense to Christians, but is as yet but little understood amongst those who look on Christianity from the outside, and who have for many years abandoned the practice of prayer, which is the drill-ground of friendship with God.

VIII. Why does not God answer Prayer?

There is among the men of the Army a good deal of intermittent and spasmodic prayer, especially in times of trouble, but it makes one rather sad on the whole, because it is so often not real prayer at all. It is cruel to be sentimental in this connection, and to say that God hears and answers any sort of prayer, because the facts are clean and clear against it. I have heard men praying in the line when I wished they would swear instead, because their prayers, which were purely selfish, expressed nothing but a broken will and the horror of death. It is a dreadful sight to see a man whimpering out prayers for personal protection in a time of stress, and the hard-bitten man beside him, still unbroken and unbeaten, swearing through his set teeth puts such a man to shame. I believe that much of the absence of prayer in the Army is due to the fact that the men completely misunderstand its province and its power, and are puzzled about the whole business. Is it any good praying for safety? If I ask God in a gas attack to

shift the wind, will He do it? If not, what good is prayer? Will prayer shift shells? If a mother prays hard for the safety of her son, will he be safer for that, will it protect him against shells? If not, what is the use of praying? Is not the best attitude to take up the purely fatalistic one? "If my name is on it, it will get me; if not, it won't. If it's coming, it's coming; and if it ain't, it ain't." This fatalistic attitude is almost inevitable from what little experience I have had. One walks along a trench, with trench mortars hurtling over, and the terror that men call "wind" comes, and one simply cannot avoid the conclusion, "Well, if it's coming, it's coming, and if it ain't, it ain't, and I can't help it, let's get on with the job." It is a practically inevitable attitude, and I believe that as far as it goes it is the best attitude. One cannot afford prayers for personal safety in times of stress; it is not what one ought to be thinking about, and it entails an inevitable slackening of that attitude of utter indifference to death and danger which it is one's duty to cultivate.

Moreover, I do not find in the New Testament or in the history of the Church the slightest guarantee that such prayers will be answered. Christ never promised that prayer would save us from tribulation in the world: He honestly said we should have it to bear, but that in Him we would find power to bear and overcome it. Following Christ does not mean taking up a plush cushion of comfort, but a wooden cross of pain. Presumably the early Christians who were burned, tortured, crucified, flung to lions, and visited with every imaginable

form of pain were men of prayer, but it never saved their skins. God did not intervene to quench the fire, or shut the lions' mouths. The answer to their prayers is found, not in their escape from death, or agony, but in their power to face both with an unbroken spirit and a perfect trust in God. Christ's own prayer in the Garden did not save Him from the Cross. It was not possible that the cup should pass from Him. His is the pattern prayer. His mind is occupied first and foremost with His work, which is God's Will. He hates the Cross, and wants to avoid it, if the work can be done any other way, but that comes first and foremost—Thy Will be done. That is the very essence of the Spirit of Christ. His job first, His pals next, and Himself last, and compared with the other two nowhere. Only prayer in His Name, in that spirit, is prayer at all, only prayer in that spirit has any power to help. There lies the redemption of the fatalist attitude. The true prayer in time of stress simply leaves the matter of life and death to God, and concentrates all its effort on the prayer for spiritual power to do God's Will whatever comes. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." No real loss can come to one who seeks first and foremost to do God's Will; all loss is gain when endured for Him, and in the very heart of pain endured with God we find the secret of His peace, that is the promise of Christ which is again and again more than fulfilled. Prayer is not a means to protection, but a means to courage and nobility of conduct.

A great deal of the prayerlessness out here and at

home is due, I believe, to a wrong conception of the province and power of prayer in life, and this wrong conception is largely due to the fact that many of our public prayers and much of our teaching about prayer fall short of the high and heroic standard set by Christ. We have encouraged people in the idea that prayers are a protection to the body in battle and have countenanced their being chiefly directed to that end, rather than to the spiritual support and strengthening of men to face death and danger with the single and sole aim of doing God's Will in both. When in our prayers for those we love we have said Thy Will be done, as we are in duty bound to do, we have made it an act of passive submission to the death of the loved one if it must be so, with our energy of prayer directed to his protection, rather than an act of supreme aspiration for the loved one that through him and by him God's Will may be done whatever the cost may be. There is a whole world of difference between these two prayer attitudes, so much difference that it is not too much to say that one is prayer and the other not. Much of the prayerlessness is due to disappointment with the results of prayer which is not real prayer but a pseudo-sanctified selfishness. If it is replied that for a man who is married or has anyone dependent on him the prayer for personal protection is not selfish but dictated by love, I would simply refer to the stern but honest words of Christ which warn us that God's place is first, and no other love can count with the love of His Will. "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea,

and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple " (Luke, xiv. 26). Stern and terrible words, stern and terrible conditions of true prayer. All the promises and commandments about prayer presuppose these conditions, and apart from them prayer is powerless. How we have failed to enforce those conditions, and how cruel we have been in our efforts to be kinder than Christ. The whole of our teaching about prayer in peace and in war needs to be raised to this heroic level. " Thy Will be done," as an act, not of passive submission but of intense and entirely self-forgetful aspiration, is the essential of all true prayer. Our prayers for and with the sick have been emasculated in the same way. We have made a half-hearted prayer for recovery unless it be God's Will that the sufferer should die of disease. Of course it never was and never could be God's Will that a man should die of disease. God's Will for the body is health and beauty, and sickness and disease are due to sin in the world. Our duty to sickness is to hate and detest and fight it in the Name and by the Will of God, and the whole energy of our prayer ought to be poured out in aspiration that God's Will, which is health, may be done in our body in order that God's Will in the world may be done through it. Selfish prayer for recovery is just as powerless and useless as selfish efforts to acquire merit by submission to the disease as if it were sent by God. Disease is the enemy of God and must be fought by prayer. War is also the enemy of God and must be fought by prayer, and can only be abolished by prayer; but the noblest prayer a man can offer against war is the giving of his life in the war against

war. The man who dies fighting in the war to end war is on the road to abolish it; the man who dies of disease submitting to it as God's Will is on the road to perpetuate it. Prayer is never mere submission, but always tremendous and concentrated aspiration; it is never occupied with self, but always with God's Will. To such a height must we raise prayer, and in so doing we shall do much to abolish the difficulties of it in the mind of the soldier and the ordinary man.

It ain't as I thinks 'E'll keep me safe
  While the other blokes goes down,
And it ain't as I wants to leave this earth
  And wear an 'ero's crown.
It ain't for that as I says my prayers
  When I goes to the attack;
But I pray that whatever comes my way,
  I may never turn my back.
I leaves the matter o' life and death
  To the Lord as knows what's best,
And I pray that I still may play the man
  Whether I turns East or West.
I'd sooner that it were East, ye know,
  To Blighty and my gal Sue.
I'd sooner be there, wi' the sun in 'er 'air
  And the summer skies all blue.
But grant me, God, to do my bit,
  And then, if I must turn West,
I'll be unashamed when my name is named,
  And I'll find a soldier's rest.

IX. Is the Bible True?

Men have always sought for and earnestly desired an infallible authority on ultimate questions, an authority conclusive by nature. At first Christians sought to vest the Church with this authority and make

it a deadly sin to doubt it. The infallible Church publicly broke down at the time of the Reformation, but the desire for an absolute authority remained as strong as ever, and the Protestant shifted the burden off the Church and placed it on the Bible. This was really an irrational jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. Final and absolute authority in ultimate matters is a human impossibility, because man grows in knowledge of Truth, and a final and absolute authority could stop that growth; but it is more rational to centre authority in a living society rather than in a book. The scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century made this idolatry of the Bible impossible for thinking Christians, and they have long ago outgrown it, and forsaken all mechanical theories of inspiration; but for the ordinary man the truth of Christianity is still largely bound up with old theories of Bible inspiration. All ideas of a progressive revelation of God to man are still foreign to his mind. He still mixes up the six days' creation with salvation through Christ, and fails to hear the pleading of the Christ because Jonah drowns it from the belly of the whale, and Balaam's ass shouts louder. He is naturally a little puzzled by the parson who airily laughs away the six days' creation on Monday and solemnly from the altar gives as a reason for keeping Sunday the fact that God having completed the creation in six days rested on the seventh, and hallowed it. He cannot reconcile the two, the extreme solemnity of the affirmation of the Truth and the extreme levity of the denial, and it is odd, isn't it ? Truth to tell, we have not been quite honest about the Bible. We most of us hold

one theory and assent by our silence to our people holding another. Our defence generally is that our people do not want higher criticism from the pulpit, but religion. That is true, but we must find a way of giving them both. I could not be a Christian if Christianity were really bound up with verbal inspiration, and I cannot blame the soldier who finds he cannot do it either. I respect his intelligence. We must give the soldier of to-day and the citizen of to-morrow the Bible we ourselves have got as the product of sane modern criticism and Biblical research, and we must alter our liturgy to avoid undignified and nonsensical statements.

X. The Muddle of the Church.

Not long ago I held a conference of about 300 fighting men drawn from two crack regiments, and invited them to state freely their reasons for religious indifference among men. This Essay was then almost complete, and every single one of these difficulties was brought up, naturally and spontaneously, by the men. There were others which it would be well for us to consider.

One difficulty was the parson. That we must all recognise as a melancholy fact; one of the chief religious difficulties of the private soldier is the parson. He talks in an affected fashion, and very often talks nonsense. The Church suffers badly from dry rot in the pulpit, and if she is to touch the soldier she must get rid of it. And she must not only put a ban on dry rot, but she must also ban the parsonic manner,

and all forms of affectation—they come between the men and Christ. The Church is also a financial muddle. The soldier sees that it is a muddle, and you cannot persuade him that it is anything else. The Archbishop of Canterbury's salary is of course a trust fund, but the fact that it is a personal salary sticks in the ordinary man's throat. Bishops should not live in palaces and pay huge sums to keep them up, and parsons should not live in barracks and incur bankruptcy for dilapidations. It is awful to realise that when one stands up to preach Christ the soldier feels that you are defending a whole ruck of obsolete theories and antiquated muddles. It is all so much barbed wire through which one has to climb before one finds his heart. There are gaps in the wire which love in Christ can make, but there are many hearts one cannot reach because of the entanglements of absurdities in which to his mind the Gospel of Christ is involved. Christ will satisfy all men's souls if we can show Him to them as He is, but there is a mist of many lies that dims the vision now.

Since this Essay was begun I have been engaged in the terrific fighting of the great advance on the Messines—Wytschaete Ridge. I am suffering as we all are from that complete paralysis of the brain that follows a supreme effort. For the last ten days I have not thought of intellectual difficulties, but only of Christ the Captain of Mankind, and yet I am convinced that I could not have kept my vision of Him clear through all this horror had not these questions

been fully answered in my mind. One picture remains with me: a wooded ridge wrapped in a thick black cloud of battle smoke through which I peered anxiously, knowing that men I had learned to love were fighting there for their very lives, and behind the cloud a blood-red sunset with the single evening star, hidden from their eyes. It remains to me the picture of the world all black with battle smoke which dims our eyes to Christ's eternal Truth. But I pray as I prayed then that when the smoke has cleared away, and the roar of a breaking world dies down, men may lift up their eyes and see in a calmer, cleaner world the star light in the face of Jesus Christ. War is as horrible as Calvary, but it may end in the glory of another Easter dawn.

XVI

WHEN THE PRIESTS COME HOME

By the Rev. KENNETH E. KIRK, M.A.

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XVI

WHEN THE PRIESTS COME HOME

Some of the chaplains who have been on active service will never come home, of course—never, that is, as parochial clergy. The powers and possibilities they have discovered in the field affect their view of the future so deeply that they will seek some kindred sphere of work—the mission field, say, or the Colonies—in which to minister with the freedom and the opportunities they have had in France. And those who are content or constrained to return to parishes at home will neither be content nor constrained to fall into the old grooves again. Consciously or unconsciously, almost all of them have changed in method, manner, and outlook—generally be it said for the better. It is possible that the Church at home will be shocked,—it is certain she will be surprised,—but if the returned chaplain remembers the things he has learnt and impresses them on his flock, the results will be all to the good. Many of these things are indicated by other writers in this book; many have already become truisms; in this Essay are set down a few only of

those which may be most dominant when the priests come home.

Foremost among them is the conviction that, hidden under the " inarticulate religion " of the British soldier of which so much has been written, lies a deep and intense reverence for the priesthood. Almost any chaplain can evoke it : the few who fail to do so fail because they do not reverence their own priesthood themselves. It is almost entirely independent of the chaplain's personality. To the soldier—officer or man—he is the emissary of a different world from that in which they fret and sweat and fight. He may be breezy or quiet, tactless or diplomatic, affable or retiring ; he may preach well or badly ; but still he represents another world—a better world—of spiritual things. Even though he be a drag on the mess and *de trop* in the billet, he is at all times looked upon as a repository from which can be drawn the peculiar benefits of religion. And this estimate is the lowest which even an unpopular chaplain need fear, unless he prove himself entirely and openly unworthy of his vocation ; a priest more richly endowed with discretion, zeal, and sympathy is actually and constantly expected to overflow with every spiritual force that the divine ministry can provide.

I should like to elaborate this point ; for, if it is true, it is of enormous and alarming importance in the demand it will make upon clergy after the war. Most chaplains, I suppose, have felt from time to time the irksomeness of belonging—in a famous phrase—to the " superworld of officers. " Uniform, badges of rank, position in mess, salutes and their acknowledgment,

seem so many barriers separating them from the men they try to serve. But among the things that every chaplain knows is the extraordinary ease with which these barriers can be broken down. So great is the demand for the priest and his ministry (what is actually demanded of him I will try to say in a moment) that he has only to show himself in the slightest degree accessible, to be overwhelmed with appeals, overt or implied, for help. Nor is the help that is asked for of that material kind which is so constantly expected of the parish priest. It is rather the advice, comfort, or inspiration which, from his official position as a minister of the Gospel, men naturally suppose him qualified to dispense. Furthermore, in addition to making himself accessible, he may, if he will, deliberately force his priesthood upon the consciences of men—not as one advocating a panacea for all ills, but as a shepherd tenderly searching for the ailments and needs of his flock and skilfully offering the appropriate remedy. If he does so, he finds in almost every case that what, in a parish, would probably be resented as a tactless interference in private affairs, is now welcomed as a much-needed, much-desired offer of help. The chaplain, in short, ceases to be an officer the moment he exhibits himself as a priest ; more truly, he has never been an officer to the men at all, though they treated him as one until they could find the priest in him ; more truly still, as soon as he shows himself a priest he shows himself also the perfect officer—a father, leader, comforter and example to his men.

Let me illustrate this, for it is a point which might be disputed. There is a chaplain still on active

service who never exhibits any of the qualities which are alleged to appeal to men, and who openly deplores his lack of them. He has, he says, none of the conversational refinements which gradually lead on from discussion of current affairs to conviction of sin. His first introduction of himself to an unknown member of his flock usually takes this form : " Oh—I'm your chaplain ; wouldn't you like to give me your mother's name and address so that I can write to her if you are killed ? " You would scarcely call this a happy opening ; but because it touches at once upon two of the greatest things in the world—Love and Death—it unseals almost every heart. With the ultimate result that when he visits a billet he has no need to lead up to his purpose, but someone says at once : " Won't you preach us a sermon, Father ? " (you have to call him " Father " ; you couldn't call him anything else) ; and by candle-light in a ruined house or barn he meditates aloud for them upon the life of Christ.

It would be idle to say that all chaplains achieve this position ; some, I suppose, have little sense of the romance, diversity, and sacredness of their vocation ; others still retain the shyness which made them unable to grip the consciences of a majority of their parishioners at home ; many, in the dreary routine of trench-warfare,are in danger of losing their zeal for souls, and divert their energies into easier but less sacred channels. Yet though perhaps the position is attained by few, it is not untrue to say that the Army holds it open for all, only asking of them that they should step in and fill it. The soldier is puzzled and disappointed

if his chaplain is affable and nothing more ; he honours and loves a priest who, while avoiding tactless inquiries or dull iterations, firmly puts spiritual things first—provided always that he is not indulging in a kind of clerical scalp-hunting, but is evidently inspired by a genuine love of souls. Here is a fragment from a wounded soldier's letter to the chaplain of his battalion : " Dear sir, I often used to wish you would talk seriously and privately to me about religion, though I never dared to ask you, and I must admit I seemed to be very antagonistic when you did start."—And it is the same with the officers as with the men, allowing for natural differences in education and maturity. The chaplain is, of course, always a nuisance to the official mind ; the Army gives him so little and he wants so much—transport and horses and services and reading-rooms and chapels and the like ; and some chaplains seem to constitute themselves as the skeleton in the orderly-room cupboard, materialising at untoward moments with impossible requests. But in spite of this latent element of friction the chaplain should find among officers the same desire for his ministrations as among men, though the decencies and demands of mess etiquette may hide it rather more deeply.

This then is the first of the things that every chaplain knows—that he is wanted, badly wanted, as a priest ; even though he be unfortunate enough to be merely " tolerated " as a man. He knows too—though it is hard to put the knowledge into words—exactly what it is he is wanted *for*. He knows he is indispensable, because he is the one representative of peace in an

atmosphere of strife. To him men turn, as by instinct, for an antidote against strain, friction, weariness and depression. There are other antidotes, of course, some of them dishonourable, others blameless, but often hard to come by; yet even the dullest dog of a chaplain, so long as he can keep his own spirit equable, comes in the first rank among the influences that make life tolerable at the Front. He penetrates into every place, from the guard-room to the General's mess; and everywhere, by the slightest effort of courtesy, sympathy, and tact, he can smooth over the bruised or broken surface of the soldier's life. "I think the evenings you spent with us in the hut did me more physical good than gallons of doctor's medicine, and more moral good than if you had preached us a sermon every day of your life; and I know Jack and Jimmy say the same"—this is an extract (with amended spelling) from a very ordinary soldier's letter to a very ordinary chaplain; but I doubt if in a parish at home the same lads and the same chaplain would ever have got on to speaking terms at all.

For remember that these chaplains are no special breed of richly-gifted priests, but just the curates you knew in your parishes before the war. Their failings are as obvious now as then; yet no one who has watched their work at the Front can fail to see how greatly they are in demand as ministers of consolation. Even when inactive habits make them slow to seize the countless opportunities that offer, their presence in billet, dug-out, or trench is enough to bring a soothing influence to bear, though no word of religion be spoken. Comfort, joy, and peace go with

the chaplain on his round of visits; and stay behind when he has gone. For they *do* stay behind; their effect is permanent; they are positive and powerful forces.

And here we reach a second point of importance. We are apt to think of consolation as a negative thing, producing a sweet and placid resignation to the Will of God. This is not even a Christian point of view; it is certainly not the one in vogue in France. The consolation expected of the chaplain—the peace for which his ministrations are invoked—is not a passive but an active thing. Were he simply to conjure up a weak contentment, a transient forgetfulness of trouble, its effects would quickly vanish the moment men emerged into the inevitable horrors of the front line or the inevitable monotony of supply and transport duties. A ministry that gave no more than this would be as superfluous as useless. Something much rarer is demanded; and it is because the chaplains are able to supply it that their position grows even more secure and their presence even more welcome from day to day. How they manage it is hard to say; but they do manage it, often even in their sermons—and it is not easy to prepare and preach a good sermon at the Front. When you hear of a certain priest (as you constantly do hear of the best of them) that "he never talks about religion, but just gives straightforward manly addresses of the kind men love to listen to," it does not mean—as might at first appear—that he has substituted popular ethics for real religion. It means, on the contrary, that he has used his opportunity to administer not a narcotic but a

stimulant ; that the Gospel he preaches is not a false sentimentalism but a genuine inspiration. And in endless cases " visits " and " talks " go the same way as sermons. They renew in the soldier that sense of the dramatic—that appreciation of himself as a dominant character in an enthralling drama—which the " Student in Arms " held to be an essential factor in his equipment for the fight. They leave men not in any way resigned to their lot, but eager to amend it ; they help them not to endure but to transcend.

This distinction between a ministry that provides at best a momentary and elusive forgetfulness and one that gives a permanent inspiration is not, of course, a new one ; but it has been marked and underlined by what we have seen at the Front. War-experience has taught many chaplains that it is perhaps the fundamental distinction between true and false religion. Curiously enough, war-experience has shown, also, that it may be the fundamental distinction between true and false art. A digression on this point, if it helps to make the argument clearer, is not superfluous. All down the British front, often well under shell-fire, are a row of " gaffs " and picture-palaces, hastily improvised by soldier-artistes in huts or barns, or more worthily housed in genuine French theatres. The romance of these entertainments has yet to be written, and their high moral value to be appreciated. With few exceptions they present triumphs of scene-painting, lighting, music, and stage-craft under circumstances of the greatest difficulty. Their ideals are often far in advance of those of more ambitious spectacles at home, and, if they can survive the crowning test of peace,

might profoundly affect the artistic sense of the new England. That, however, is another question; what is important for us to notice is that they in their turn give an instance of this same distinction between the ministry that consoles alone and the ministry that inspires by its consolation.[1] The cinemas, of course, are merely instruments of forgetfulness, and so are the greater number of the "turns" (do not blame them for this; their function, though not the highest, is very high and laudable); but in almost every performance there are also passages of permanent creative value. Such passages may be either serious or comic. If the first, they raise the soldier out of himself to a higher plane of ideals; and no one responds more readily to the influence of good art than an audience on active service. If the second, they have an *intimité* of insight into the trials of trench-life which teaches the soldier not simply to laugh, but to laugh at his own troubles, and by laughing to rise above them. I have known performers of wide experience and eminent reputation fail with a trench audience, achieving a momentary success but forgotten in a day; whilst

[1] This is, of course, no more than a platitude to the trained artist. Mr. Ffrangçon-Davies, for example, in his *Singing of the Future*, distinguishes very clearly between *entertainment* (or "Art" so called) and genuine *art*. "'Art' which leads *nowhere*," he says, "cannot be compared with art which leads *somewhere* in particular; song which limits life's ideals is despicable when judged by song which expands them." Compare also Ruskin's distinction between the landscape-painting of the old masters, which "developed and addressed the highest powers of mind belonging to the human race," and that of Claude and Salvator, "understood, as far as it went, in a moment, but . . . in all its operations on the mind, unhealthy, hopeless, and profitless."

the lilt of a folk-song, simply sung by a soldier-troupe, has exercised an inspiring influence for weeks; and I knew one man at least who died more bravely because the words of such a song came into his mind—they had lingered there for months, and their memory was bright enough to strengthen him at his death.[1]

It is not fanciful, though it may seem so, to find this distinction between the art that pleases only and the art that inspires as well, even among the peripatetic entertainers of the Army. For all of them have been under fire, and many of them have taken their share in trench warfare and in battle; so that they have a sympathetic insight, rich from their own experience, into what the soldier needs. And it is to their credit to add that, in the vast majority of cases, their aim is not simply to amuse ("to give the boys a cheerio," as a breezy but unintelligent performer expressed it) but to inspire; to help their audience not to forget the fighting, but to fight the better.[2] One of them—after prolonged thought on the subject—defined the difference between what may be called respectively narcotic and stimulative art by saying that the latter

[1] Here is a further illustration. A string-quartette of soldiers (organised by themselves in their spare moments, be it noticed, with the deliberate purpose of playing good music to their comrades) were playing in a base hospital. A wounded Australian asked for the *Barcarolle*; they played it, and he died before it ended. It is not too much to suppose that he chose the melody to help him to die simply because it had often previously helped him to live.

[2] It is noticeable, for example, how keenly on the whole the performers avoid, and the audiences resent, the introduction of vulgarity into these performances. "We don't want that sort of thing out here" is a quite commonly expressed criticism—implying that art is too valuable at the Front for the smallest part of it to be wasted in aimless, even though amusing, suggestiveness.

was "satisfying" and the former not; and a better description would probably be hard to find—for the needs of men in the shadow of death are very elemental, and to satisfy them is a high achievement. And in exactly the same way the chaplains know that there is a ministry of consolation which "satisfies"; in that it creates and maintains a spirit of high effort in the face of all difficulties and sorrows. It is the consciousness of this ministry that they will carry back to their parishes when the war is over; this form of consolation they will try to exercise there. Their aim will be not so much to dry the tears of neurotic sufferers as to refresh the souls of highly-tried warriors. And in so far as they are able to codify their experience and to keep it intact under the disintegrating influence of peace, it will modify their life and methods in parochial work in many important directions.

In the first place they will go about their business with a new and buoyant confidence. We used to be rather apologetic about our religion, introducing it with subtle phrases of suggestion, like a politician wooing the votes of an unsympathetic electorate. In other cases our apology took the shape of truculence, as who should say "This is what I believe; take it or leave it as you like"—which really meant "This is what I am going to believe, whether it's true or not." In each case we probably assumed the callousness or hostility of our audience; we certainly implied a disbelief in our own Gospel. All that is over now. We know that the Spirit of God in men's hearts makes them eager for a priesthood exercising its functions without a veil on its face; we know too

that in countless instances our own words, or ministry, or even our mere presence—as priests more than as men—has cheered, refreshed, and strengthened; we know, in short, that we are wanted. This confidence—which is a confidence not in ourselves but in the Gospel of which we are ministers—should make us bold where we have been timid, and leaders where we were laggards. Moreover, even though much remains difficult, uncertain, and at cross purposes in the future of the Church, we shall have too sure a sense of her divine mission and her supernatural strength to trouble overmuch; and peevish controversy and ill-tempered denunciation will lose much of their present vogue. We shall rest content to retain contrary opinions, assured that, so long as we exercise our own ministry unhesitatingly, God will find a way for the dissensions that have vexed us.

This confidence, too, should breed in the priesthood a brave serenity which has been much lacking in our Church. The Army has asked of its chaplains such a serenity—a *sans-gêne* that brings hope and strength to others. The chaplains have been able to give it, not so much because they had it to give, as because the mere demand for their help gave them a joy and peace and confidence which they could hand back to their flock. Surely the life-history of many priests in the past has followed this model: ordained in the first enthusiasm of a great vocation, they have learnt even in the earlier years of their work to distrust first themselves and then their inspiration. Different causes have led to this result—the preoccupation of the parish with worldly affairs, leading the priest to think himself

unwanted; the timidity of the priest, making him see rebuffs where none were meant; or even his own tactlessness, inspiring opposition not to his mission but to his person. But whatever the cause, the outcome is the same. The curate by degrees becomes a disappointed man; and consoles himself either with a hobby (natural history or Church history—it makes no difference), or by confining his attentions to a devout few, or by exercising himself in some secular sphere where at all events his talents or personality will make him valuable—as a few, but only a few, of the clergy at the Front have been content to be called good chaps because they seemed unable to become good chaplains.

For those of us who return this danger, if not abolished, will at least be diminished greatly. Secure in the faith that our ministry is much wanted and much welcomed, we shall have a peace of mind that we found it hard enough to attain before. And in this connection our duty is clear. We must try in England as we tried in France to maintain and develop by every means in our power this unruffled calm of spirit, knowing it to be our greatest asset—the one thing above all others that people wish to learn from us. By prayer, communion, and meditation we must lay the foundations of a building which no worldly troubles can shake.

And because habits react upon character, we must attempt, even in externals, to adapt our behaviour to the same rule of serenity. A high-pitched voice, a strained or restless manner; immoderate laughter, unnatural gloom—all these are symptoms of an unbalanced soul; and to restrain them and cultivate their

opposites will at all events help to restore balance and stability within. This is a matter to which those who have in hand the training of the clergy might well give close attention—how to teach them to be "more natural in spiritual things." I should not, of course, wish for the development of a new school of manners, however good in themselves; that, in the end, would simply substitute as a cult the placidity of a Grosvenor for the posturing of a Bunthorne. But at least it should be possible in theological colleges to instil more forcibly the avoidance of those tricks which, both in church and out of it, too often make the parson unpleasantly conspicuous. Many chaplains have sloughed them, almost miraculously, at the Front; cannot they discover some way to scotch them at home as well?

More important than this, perhaps, is a further point. If all men need our ministry, we must make ourselves accessible to all men. We must not burden ourselves unduly with organisations—the impossibility of losing himself in organisation has been one of the chaplain's greatest safeguards at the Front. We must be content to waste time wisely in the market-place—gossiping like Socrates with all comers. But that this time may be *wisely* wasted in giving to all that spirit of serene activity which we have learnt to recognise as superlatively Christian, we must know, more than ever, the art of treating men as individuals. This art is given to some; but all can develop it with the development of their own souls; and those who are so developing it can forward its growth by study. Moral Theology has been much abused, yet it is exactly

what is needed—the science of applying the broad principles of Christianity to particular cases. It seems to involve three branches—the discovery of general principles ; the choice of the one most applicable to each particular case ; and the skilful presentation of it in such a form that it meets with acceptance. In each of these branches much work has still to be done to bring them up to date. For the first we must study the special forms which sin, temptation, and suffering take to-day, and know in general—not from book learning but from genuine religious experience—in what way the Gospel is a specific for each. For the second, the clergy must apply themselves to the study of character and its diversities with far more industry than in the past ; and by fearlessly dissecting themselves must learn critically but sympathetically to analyse others. It is pathetic that too often the vicar or the curate is the last person in the parish to detect a hypocrite or rebuke an impostor ; pathetic, also, that often he is the last to recognise excellence in an outward pagan or lapsed member of the Church. For the third, we must learn to command acceptance of what we teach not by virtue of our position ("It must be right because they do it at St. George's"; —"I know it's true, because the Archdeacon said so"), nor even by the strength of logic,—for logic never convinced an unwilling listener ; and the lesser educated of two men always suspects a trap in the arguments of his superior—but by the manifest truth that we have applied our principles to ourselves, and that they have made us more peaceful, more charitable, and more compassionate than before.

Equipped in some such way, the parish priest of to-morrow should be able to undertake his work as a physician of souls with greater skill and a firmer touch. Insight and training will have taught him to recognise the hidden causes of spiritual disorders; he will be able to distinguish between the "feelings" or "difficulties" of those who come to him for guidance, and the real needs of which they are only symptoms; he will have learnt neither to mistake deep humility for apparent callousness, nor morbid self-denunciation for genuine contrition. Experience will have shown him how to add discriminating treatment to wise diagnosis; when to be stern, when to be tender; what spiritual exercises to recommend and what to deprecate in each particular case. And lastly, sympathy and study will have fitted him to administer his remedies in terms appropriate to the education and development of his hearers, and in a manner that shall induce compliance without violating freedom of choice.

And here is a final prophecy or precept, which may perhaps help to guard against possible misconceptions. Though an enhanced serenity must characterise the new priesthood, it will go hand in hand with an enlarged ambition. Few of us, I believe, will be content to go back to the restrained and limited activities of so many curates before the war. We have seen two things clearly: first, that there is no man so dead to religion that he does not treasure somewhere a respect for the priesthood and a desire for its ministrations; secondly, that there is no human activity which may not be ennobled and forwarded by the influence of the Gospel. On the first count, we shall claim the right of friendship

and intercourse not merely with professed churchgoers but with people of every kind; and shall visit their homes with far more initial sympathy and a far greater expectation that they will respond. It is not the outsider who will resent this, but the professed churchgoer; he will fancy himself neglected, and will have to learn that religion is its own reward, and that he cannot claim, as a sort of spiritual bonus, the adulation and obsequiousness of his clergy. On the second count, we shall never again immerse ourselves so thoroughly in our services, Sunday schools, and church organisations as to overlook the wider activities of society. I like to think of the parish priest as fulfilling the Shakespearean stage direction—"*Scene: a public place. Enter First Citizen;*"—for his ministry should mostly be spent neither in church nor in the homes of the faithful, but in public places; and he should be the First Citizen of his parish, sufficiently well known to all to be absolutely at home with each; standing above all party relationship, but consulted by the leaders of every party—the interpreter between social classes, the mediator between master and men, the peacemaker between capital and labour. And so the word "parson" will revert to its old proud meaning of "persona," and the priest will take in his parish a position analogous to that of the best chaplains in the Army.

I do not mean, of course, that the parson should sit on endless committees as an expert in education, housing, hygiene, labour disputes, and the like; but rather that he must show sympathy on each and all of these questions with those who—often from conflicting points of view—are attempting to find their

solution. And as his own life deepens in serenity, he will grow less anxious to speak and more anxious to learn, and at the same time the pioneers of reform will come to value first of all his sympathy and then his advice; and though he never inaugurates one pennyworth of organisation, he will ultimately find himself at the back of every movement, inspiring, controlling, or restraining as the need may be. There are Brigadiers in France who refer almost every question affecting the well-being of the men to their chaplains for comment and advice; when the character of the priesthood has so developed that county councils and committees do the same by the clergy at home, the Church of England can be certain that her ministry has absorbed the lessons learnt by the chaplains at the Front.

XVII

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

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XVII

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

"The true God is not a spiritual troubadour wooing the hearts of men and women to no purpose. The true God goes through the world like fifes and drums and flags, calling for recruits along the street."—*H. G. Wells.*

It is, so I believe, literal truth to describe the religion of Jesus Christ and the service of His Kingdom as "The Great Adventure"; or, with yet stricter accuracy, as "The Greatest Adventure." Of that I am sure, however unfitted this pen may be to deal with such a theme.

After three years in the school of war men are gathering knowledge—and much of it is bitter to the taste. If we know War as Curse, as naked Sin, as colossal Waste, we know it too as fire that purges, as light that reveals. War is a sign-post to reality for a generation that was, or was becoming, half-blind. It is an index of things as they are; and, for that very reason, it prods men's minds, as with an ox-goad, to consider things as they might be. Among these revelations and discoveries some, as it seems to me, stand out with startling vividness; and they are

intimately connected with the theme of this chapter. One is, that there exist in the ordinary man hitherto unsuspected reservoirs of heroism, undreamed of capacities for sacrifice. Then again—this indeed is no new discovery, but the war has placarded it before men's eyes—Christianity is seen to be essentially not static nor passive nor an institutional type of thing at all, but an enterprise, a Crusade, an Adventure, a Cause that must win or go under. And, further, the reason why, for many generations, Christianity has made comparatively little headway is because its exponents and representatives have usually appealed to men's self-interest rather than to their capacity for self-sacrifice. These are large statements, and to justify and amplify them will be the task of the pages that follow.

I. Christianity began with the greatest adventure in history, the Divine adventure of the Incarnation. To use such a word in such a connection is not mere hyperbole. The idea of daring everything for the sake of a great, but unassured, result is one that lies at the very core of Christianity. What else was it but a huge adventure when Love came forth from the tents of Eternity to woo and win the heart of humanity ? In a world of free men the result of the Incarnation could never have been a foregone conclusion.

So too the earthly life of Jesus Christ seems always to be tinged with this sense of risk, of adventure. For He was, as recent theology has re-discovered, a real man : there was nothing make-believe about His humanity : He did not wear His manhood as a disguise. And, as a real man, He lived by faith. He had set

out on the tremendous enterprise of commending God to men, of winning men to God; He did not *know* if and how far His enterprise would succeed. Indeed within a very few years it brought Him to the Cross, which to the men who loved Him appeared no less than irretrievable disaster; while to Him, in those hours of utter agony of mind, it must have seemed less a means of triumph than a supreme venture of the love that ever drove Him on to dare anything and everything for His purpose.

In the same way, to His would-be disciples He offers no mere "salvation" but an adventure. They, human-like, cannot help wondering what they are going to get when He comes into His "Kingdom"; He is always trying to make them understand their discipleship is much more a matter of giving than of getting. He is not so much a teacher founding a school, or a sovereign dispensing favours, as a crusader collecting an army. He captains a spiritual "Foreign Legion" of men who are required to dare anything for the greatest of all causes. He makes it quite plain that, from the material point of view, men have everything to lose and nothing to gain by their attachment to Him and His service. "If any man will come after Me, let him say 'No' to self, and take up his Cross daily, and follow Me. . . . For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life, for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it." It is very striking how frequently and how strongly this conception of Christian discipleship is emphasised in the Gospel story. We find men drawn to Him by a kind of irresistible attraction, but they evidently

have a feeling at the back of their minds that they are "let in" for what is probably a pretty desperate enterprise. "Let us also go, that we may die with Him," cries Thomas—voicing no doubt what the others felt too—when the Master is proposing to visit the capital at a crisis when such a visit must mean almost certain death. They find it very difficult to understand anything of His real plans and hopes; in this instance they think His proposal is the height of folly; but they have come so to love and trust Him that they will follow Him anywhere, regardless of the consequences.

There is no question that the time has come to re-emphasise and re-assert this aspect of Christian discipleship. I am not saying that these elements in faith and service, vital as they are, cover the whole ground of personal Christianity. But, in our generation as in many that are past, they have unquestionably been allowed to fall into the background of Christian thinking and Christian experience, both in individual lives and in the Church as a whole. In many quarters, both within and without the Church, the idea is still prevalent that the profession of Christianity involves, strictly, an acceptance of certain religious propositions, an adherence to a certain kind of public religious worship, and a safe insurance for the soul against ultimate disaster. Perhaps that is why Christianity, as thus presented, has often seemed to appeal chiefly to the mentally shallow, the morally feeble, and the naturally pious—indeed to all the multitudes of the unadventurous souls. As against this view of the Christian religion it cannot be too strongly emphasised that

faith in Jesus Christ involves, first and foremost, a species of adventure : an adventure along the line of a unique and tremendous personal relationship, and into the region of a wholly different and very difficult way of living.

All the things in life that are most worth having, says a great American, " have their home between a risk and an opportunity." That statement is certainly true of all that part of man's outlook and experience that we call " faith." Faith, for the Christian, is not the mechanical use of some credal map ; it is a faring forth of the soul into an untrodden country. Guided though he may be by the accumulated experience of Christian history, each fresh Christian has *something new* in his faith ; for him there is in it, necessarily, something of romantic experiment. And he who casts in his lot with Jesus Christ will have to maintain his faith against odds sooner or later. The point is vividly illustrated by R. L. Stevenson in one of his " Fables," in which three men going on a pilgrimage discuss the grounds of faith.[1] One, a priest, bases his faith on miracles ; another, a " virtuous person," on metaphysics ; the third, " an old rover with his axe," says nothing at all. " At last one came running and told them all was lost ; that the powers of darkness had besieged the Heavenly Mansions, that Odin was to die and evil triumph. ' I have been grossly deceived,' cried the virtuous person. ' All is lost now,' said the Priest. ' I wonder if it is too late to make it up with the Devil,' said the

[1] This summary of the " Fable " is taken from R. A. P. Hill's *The Interregnum*, p. 10—a very suggestive book.

virtuous person. 'Oh, I hope not,' said the Priest, 'and at any rate we can but try. But what are you doing with your axe?' says he to the Rover. 'I am off to die with Odin,' said the Rover."

Many of us have been putting our religion the wrong way round. A great deal of modern religion is, or was, as Mr. Neville Talbot has reminded us, "drenched with self-regard." The official exponents of Christianity have too commonly allowed, or even encouraged, the notion that a Christian's chief function is to save his own soul; and religion, for many, has tended to become a refined form of selfishness.

In this, as in many other religious questions, the time has surely come for serious re-thinking and re-stating. Having regard to the extraordinarily strong statements which Christ made on the subject, it is difficult to see how a man can legitimately call himself a Christian unless he is beginning to "care for something not himself more than he cares for himself," unless he realises perfectly clearly that his contact with God in Christ means that he is absolutely committed, body and soul, to the Cause for which Christ died and lives. It is a faulty and unworthy conception of God and of man which pictures Christianity as a sort of colossal benefit society for securing the safety and happiness of that section of humanity which can learn correctly its formulæ of admission. God is not like that. In Christ's thought of Him, He always seems to be more concerned with "outsiders" than with the "elect." It cannot conceivably be any form of selfishness that God invites men to share. It is truer to think of Him as "going through

the world like fifes and drums and flags, calling for recruits along the street" to come and help in the Divine adventure of a world's redemption.

II. And what, more exactly, is the nature of this Adventure, this Crusade, into which Christ's followers are summoned to fling all their energies and capacities? Christ Himself described it as the Kingdom of God, which we may broadly interpret as a state of affairs in which men individually and in their mutual relationships, in fact *in all their living together*, will recognise and give effect to the sovereignty of the God of Jesus Christ. Here is an objective broad enough for a race, high enough for the highest human idealism, and sufficiently immediate and practicable to attract the devotion of every single heart and mind. Even its partial realisation would be enough to transform the face of the world. The truth is, we are as yet only in the very early stages of the evolution of the Kingdom of God. In the words of Mr. Chesterton's oft-quoted dictum, "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried." There are many signs that the time has come, and that men see that the time has come, to make the experiment of *applied Christianity* on a scale as large as the world. This war has produced in the general mind of humanity a ferment of thought and hope and longing such as history has never before witnessed. To quote Mr. Wells again—and, whatever may be thought of some of his views, he is probably justified in claiming to be a "scribe to his generation"—"All mankind is seeking God. There is not a nation nor a city in the globe where men are not being urged at

this moment by the Spirit of God in them towards the discovery of God. . . . The Kingdom of God on earth is not a metaphor, not a mere spiritual state, not a dream, not an uncertain project; it is the thing before us, it is the close and inevitable destiny of mankind."[1]

Whatever may be the total significance, for all the ages, of this project of the Kingdom of God, the immediate task for our own generation is sufficiently clear. *Our* line of adventure will have to be in the three closely related regions of international relationships, of race contact, and of all that accumulation of social and industrial strife and difficulty and unrest that is commonly designated as the "Social Problem."

It is hardly thinkable that men generally, after the object lessons of this war, will make no effort to import a wholly new character into international relationships. Indeed there are many signs of a deep and widespread determination to find a solution for this, the greatest of all the "reconstruction" problems that now confront the world. The nations simply cannot afford to continue indefinitely living on an earth where armed might rather than public law is the regulating factor in all their relationships; they cannot do other than embark on "the enterprise of saving the earth as a place worth living in." If there were no other compelling motive, we should be forced to keep in view this goal of a new and better world by the thought of our debt to the dead. Never before in the world's history has there been such a vast deliberate outpouring of human life; and the one utterly intolerable

[1] "God the Invisible King," p 131.

thought is that these millions should have died in vain. Those myriads of graves on all the Fronts should save us—and we in England need it—from lowered and unworthy aims, and should hold us steadfast to our highest idealism and the one true objective of a new world of brotherhood and good will.

It is noteworthy that the keenest minds, and many of the greatest leaders in the Allied cause, have never lost sight of this ultimate aim. Let me illustrate this point with one or two quotations. Our late Premier, in well-remembered phrase, insisted on "a real partnership of the nations" as being an essential part of our war purpose. "When once the world," says an able writer in the *Round Table*, "and specially the democratic world, has proved that not only will it not tolerate the overthrow of right by might but is willing to combine to define, obey and enforce a code of public right, covering the whole Earth, militarism will be dead and the world will be free as it has never been free before." And here are some weighty sentences in President Wilson's recent official Message to the Provisional Government of Russia: "Then," he urges (after the war for Liberty has been won), "the free peoples of the world must draw together in a common covenant, some genuine and practical co-operation that will in effect combine their force to secure peace and justice in the dealings of nations with one another. The brotherhood of mankind must no longer be a fair but empty phrase. It must be given a structure of force and reality. The nations must realise their common life and effect a workable

partnership to secure that life against the aggressions of autocratic and self-pleasing power."[1]

There are no greater political aims than these; but it is important to realise that they depend upon a profound and widespread alteration in the general mind of man. Any "partnership" of nations that is to be effective will mean that the majority of men, individually and nationally, prefer fellowship to selfishness as a basis of society. Such general preference could only be the result of a tremendous spiritual change; and where save in the religion of Jesus Christ is to be found the spiritual dynamic to work this miracle? Could modern Christianity set forth on a greater adventure than that of capturing men's minds and so bringing universal brotherhood from the realm of dreams into that of fact?

If Christianity is really capable of bringing a new savour into human relationships from the smallest to the widest scale, then there are many other points in the life of the world where it is badly needed. There are phenomena, especially in the East, which though now becoming familiar to the few are still unapprehended by the many, phenomena that are charged with grave menace as well as high hope for the years to come. India, China, Japan are waking from the sleep of ages and are demanding—in Japan's case already taking—their places in a world which through the ever-growing facilities for intercommunication has now become "a single neighbourhood." The time when a race or nation could live its own life in complete isolation from all the rest has gone never to return.

[1] *The Times*, 11th June, 1917.

And what is to regulate this new contact of races in an overcrowded world? Think, for instance, of the Japanese on America's Pacific coast, and of the "White Australia" question. Other and kindred problems are pressing on every side. Religions and civilisations of hoary antiquity, undermined by Western thought, are beginning to crumble; where may new and more stable foundations be found? The so-called backward races are for the most part either controlled by or "in the sphere of influence of" larger and stronger nations. Are they to remain in a state of permanent serfdom? Are their labour and their lands to be exploited by the white man's commercial greed? Or are they to have adequate opportunity to develop and fulfil their own destiny? And to that end are we and other "Imperial" Powers going to cleave steadfastly to the principle of governing in the interests of the governed? These are large and difficult questions. And let it be stated at once and emphatically that, if Christianity is true, then the one and only hope of their satisfactory solution lies in its *being applied*. The days are gone for ever when "Foreign Missions" could be regarded, or disregarded, as the semi-private fad of a few religious enthusiasts. The time has arrived when sane and serious men, both within and without the Churches, are beginning to see that the chief hope of the future lies in the expansion of Christianity. From every side that conclusion is thrust upon us. If Christianity is *true*, then its destiny cannot be less than world-wide. If it "works," then it provides that which all men and all nations fundamentally need. If it is both true and effective, then those men and nations who have

access to it not only have no right to keep it to themselves, but are morally bound to share it with others. In the new world-consciousness and the new longing for world-wide fellowship there is no room for a provincial salvation. "The unpardonable sin for a modern man," urges the writer of one of those striking Saturday articles in *The Times*, "is to despair of the human family, or to demand a safety for himself or for his people, which is not offered to all. We are not saved, it has been well said, except in a saved race." Could any generation want a bigger adventure than that of "making Jesus King" over the hearts and lives of all its contemporaries?

And then, thirdly, there is the region where the adventure of "applying Christianity" is perhaps more difficult and more imperative than anywhere else, namely the problem of securing justice and mercy in the world of industry. "Our civilisation," it has been strikingly said, "is uneasily poised on labour's slowly straitening back." The "problem of peace" for our own land is, on its own scale, quite as acute as that which confronts the world at large. The desire and the opportunity for reconstructing our national life on a better basis than that provided by universal self-interest are manifestly reaching a climax. There are hundreds of thousands of men and women in these islands who have never known the meaning of "life" in its fuller and richer sense, and who passionately want to "live." There are large numbers of our citizens who, as long as their dividends come in all right, know and care little or nothing about the human beings who produce them. There are some,

hard and merciless, who know they are " on the backs of " the less fortunate, and mean to stay there. On the other hand, there are many, at the top as well as at the bottom, who hate the non-human conditions of our present industrial system and long to find a way out. And, assuredly, there are multitudes of ordinary people, of the general public, who desire eagerly, pathetically, to find some better way of common life than that imposed by self-interest, distrust, or greed.

The number and complexity of the problems involved in any large and serious attempt to rebuild the national life are formidable indeed ; such as the questions of wages, employment, pensions, housing, marriage, temperance, education, and the like. To attempt to treat any of these in detail would carry us beyond the scope of this Essay. Here I will only indicate, in the merest outline, what must be the absolutely essential items in any programme of reform, objectives which every thoughtful man and woman should continually contemplate and work for. The first is the need of adequate recognition of the personality of the worker. Men and women must be treated as human beings, not as " hands " —God forgive us as a nation for ever allowing the word to have a place in our industrial vocabulary ! We have to learn the profound truth of Tolstoi's saying, " We constantly think there are circumstances in which a human being can be treated without affection, and there are no such circumstances." And then, secondly, human beings as such have a " right to life "; which is impossible unless they are conceded a " living

wage." And, thirdly, if human beings are to labour together in a vast and complex industrial system, there is quite certain to be strife and injustice involving grave suffering unless the whole system can be dominated by a real spirit of mutual understanding, sympathy, and good will, such as will both provide an atmosphere of harmony at present sorely lacking, and give birth to practical schemes of equalised opportunity, joint control, profit-sharing and the like. Here again, all will end in futile aspiration and barren talk unless some superlatively strong motive and moral driving power are forthcoming. And where can they be sought with any prospect of success save from Jesus Christ Himself? How shall men learn to submit their lives to the law of Love save through submission to the God of Love?

III. Such, in brief outline, is the "adventure" which confronts Christianity in the modern world. If only men could realise the nature, and hear the summons, of this Adventure, then, so I believe, a great proportion of those who are now Christians chiefly in name would become Christians indeed, and an enormous number of fresh recruits would flock to Christ's uplifted banner. For the war has taught us all, what we had almost forgotten, that a great response can always be evoked by a great appeal. The capacity for heroism and sacrifice, not in the picked few, but in the *average* man and woman confronted by a really big demand, has been almost of the nature of a revelation. Indeed, when the war is over, it may well be that many, combatants and non-combatants alike, will feel, almost regretfully, that something has gone out of

their lives: some great compelling force and motive urging to discipline and toil and sacrifice. What if, in the humdrum years to come, men should find to take its place some even greater and more lasting cause, demanding all they have to give, filling life full with meaning and high purpose? What if at last, as a race, we are going to find the long-sought "moral equivalent of War"? And shall we ever find a more compelling equivalent than the Adventure of applying Christianity to a desperately needy world? "We shall," it has been justly urged, "continue to deserve all the horrors of war that Fate cares to impose upon us until we render Peace as energetic and passionate for civilisation and love as War is for destruction and hate." "We need"—to use Mr. Wells's vivid picturing once again—"a standard so universal that the platelayer may say to the barrister or the duchess, or the Red Indian to the Limehouse sailor, or the Anzac soldier to the Sinn Feiner or the Chinaman, '*What are we two doing for it?*' And to fill the place of that 'It' *no other idea is great enough or commanding enough, but only the world Kingdom of God.*" All the "war virtues"—far-sighted planning, quick initiative, selfless courage, discipline, leadership, obedience, *esprit de corps*, effective co-operation and the like—all these may find permanent and satisfying vent in the crusade of the Kingdom of God.

And what prospect is there of men generally embarking upon this great adventure? In that question is involved another, which cannot be avoided if our present subject is to be properly explored, namely the question of what *the Church* is doing or is going

to do in this matter. I am well aware that there is a vast amount of Christian aspiration and Christian living that is quite outside the "Church." But in considering the enterprise of establishing the Kingdom of God, account must be taken of the organised forces of modern Christianity. It is this organised and more or less visible Christianity, and especially that part of it which is coterminous with the Church of England, that I have in mind when using the expression "the Church." In speaking of the Church and the opportunity that confronts her to-day, any language that at all fits the situation must of necessity seem exaggerated. For it is a situation fraught with the utmost peril and the utmost opportunity. With many others who are looking for the coming Kingdom, I believe profoundly that the Church has reached the cross-roads of her history; that she has now got her chance, the greatest chance in all her long existence. Her chance lies in the fact that she holds the key of humanity's unsolved problems, that she is the steward of that which the world supremely needs; there is that in her, latent and potential, which, if it were to burst forth into overflowing life, would christianise the world within a generation. That is her chance. What is going to be done with it?

It is quite true that new life can only come from the living God. On the other hand God does not as a rule carry out His reconstructive work apart from human conditions which are largely a matter of human creation. Indeed, in the matter of spiritual renewal on a large scale, it is difficult to say what are conditions and what are results; man's longing and God's response

appear to blend in a process where it is hard to distinguish human and Divine. So that there is no need or excuse for the Church to wait passively for some fresh divine afflatus. There are things that can be and ought to be done at once. And perhaps the most important of these, for us to-day, is *to recover this sense that Christianity is an Adventure*, an Enterprise, a Crusade. The Church is of necessity, of Divine necessity, an institution ; but her whole life and existence have for a long time back far too much tended to become merely institutional. The Christianity of the Church is regarded as, and has largely become, passive, static, crystallised ; whereas Christianity of the original type is energetic, explosive, revolutionary. The writer of a notable article in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review* speaks of modern Christianity as being " tied up with things as they are " ; " the Church," he says, " has been trying to referee the game of civilisation as the world now plays it rather than to revolutionise the game itself. . . . This is the real spiritual weakness of our time. We have lost sight of the venturesomeness of faith. We decorate the tombs of Abraham and Luther and the Pilgrim Fathers, men who literally went out not knowing whither they went, but we have not the courage to perpetuate their spirit and continue their adventure. . . . If not Christianity, then some radical economic revolution, like Socialism or Syndicalism, will finally break the evil charm that seems to have settled on us all."

The precise nature of the Adventure on which the Church is called to embark I have already tried to indicate. Defined more closely, and from the Church's

point of view, it means that her true line of advance is to get ahead with her primary task of spreading Christianity in a largely unchristian world; driven by a passion for the Kingdom of God to get right in among men with her message and life; to learn to care infinitely more for winning the world for Jesus Christ than for matters affecting her own life and institutions, and to utilise all her resources for that one tremendous objective; to discover and experience *as a Church* the fundamental Christian law that "he that saveth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it." If the Church could recover this conception of her life, could realise herself not as an end but as a means to an end, then she would surely throw herself at once with new zest and new power into those pressing tasks of reconstruction which, as was urged above, cannot be accomplished without the spiritual and moral dynamic which a revived Church could supply. The need of men and of nations everywhere for all that Christ alone can give would cease to be the care of a department of the Church privately and unofficially administered and would become the engrossing concern of the whole Church. The problem of creating a real comity of nations based on liberty and right and good will would be very much nearer solution if the Christian Churches of every kind could permeate public opinion with the conviction that such an ideal is not only desirable but practicable. The Church in our own land has never flagged in proclaiming the "righteousness of our cause"; but we all know that, and what many of us long to hear more

of is the hope and prospect of a new human unity such as a truly Catholic Church, commissioned by the Universal Christ, has the authority to proclaim. And as for the "Social Problem," of a truth the time has come for official Christianity to leave its ancient moorings and launch out on the broad sea. It would indeed be an adventure for the Church to climb out of her middle-class rut, shake off the clogging accretions of centuries, and go on a crusade for social justice and the brotherhood of man! The Church is called to *stand for Christ*, His thoughts, plans, ideals, way of living, before the nation and the nations; and to think, as we must think, of this as being a novel kind of enterprise for the Church and the Churches is a measure of the distance we have travelled from pure and primitive Christianity.

A man who is corpulent, middle-aged, and out of training may enter for a race, but he will scarcely get round the first corner. The Church is hardly fit for her Adventure as she is; the hope and prayer of her sons is that, fired by the vision of what might be, she may train and discipline and purify herself for the task that is laid upon her. Nothing less than a profound "change of mind" (*μετάνοια*), a thorough reformation inside and out, will serve to fit her for her work. Let it be said plainly that such reformation will have to begin with us clergy—our need of it is more than can be measured; and its scope will surely have to include as a minimum these things (I name them only: space forbids elucidation). First, *vision*—the ability to see, or begin to see, the whole situation as God sees it. Secondly, *unity;* how can she present

a united front to the powers of evil while whole sections of her forces are at loggerheads with other sections ? How can she proclaim the brotherhood of man while there is so little of true fellowship within her own borders ? And how can she speak for Christ to the world when she is not of one mind and has not any effective means of corporate utterance ? A third essential and immediate duty is that of *re-stating the Christian message* in thought and language that the ordinary man of to-day can understand. There are multitudes of men and women who long to hear of God and of Christ, but are wearied and disgusted with the conventional and ecclesiastical shibboleths that are too often offered them instead. And such re-statement must include a carefully thought out attempt to re-apply the message to modern conditions. What for instance does it really mean for a man, as to his ordinary daily life, to be a follower of Jesus Christ in this modern world, which seems so remote from that of the Gospels ? There are unquestionably large numbers of men and women, many of them unattached to any Church, who would be utterly thankful for some authoritative guidance on spiritual things : such matters as Christian (as distinct from Jewish or Puritan) Sunday observance, the truth and error of Spiritualism, the question of the future life, the nature and authority of the Bible, and the like. Fourthly, there is the question of the Church's *Public Worship.* A book of Common Prayer drawn up several centuries ago, and largely untouched since, cannot on the face of it supply all our needs to-day ; and the time is long overdue for the Church to alter and add to her book where necessary, and to give to

her liturgy and services the freshness and elasticity which are essential to true worship. And, lastly, there is grave need of reform in the Church's *organisation ;* the machinery of her work is out of date and inadequate. Such questions as those of patronage and finance (including the payment of Bishops and clergy), representative government, the connection of Church and State, the work and status of laymen and especially of women, have been left too long, and cannot safely, if the Church is to become really *free* to do her work, be left any longer. It is to be hoped that the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Church and State (1916) and the Reports, when ready, of the five Archbishops' Commissions of Inquiry—appointed as a sequel to the National Mission and now (Summer, 1917) at work—will lead to prompt and drastic action.

For indeed, for the Church of England, it is now or never. It is not conceivable that the voice of God could sound for her with more trumpet-like clearness than it does to-day. For her, as for the whole Church, the opportunity is fully here ; the adventure of giving herself for the nation, for the world, is almost thrust into her hands, so that she cannot turn aside from it without being unfaithful to the very things for which she stands. Please God, this great adventure may yet be accepted, and the Church be true to her vocation. If not . . . it may be that God will take away her candlestick and commit His Cause to some new and more adequate instrument.

IV. There is a certain danger in making large statements ; and it may perhaps form the best conclusion

to this paper to try to indicate, however briefly, something of what the "Great Adventure" would mean personally for him who writes and for those who read, for any in fact who have their feet on the Way and their faces towards the Goal. If there is to be any general discovery of the practicability of the Kingdom of God, then each one of us must be prepared to do some personal exploring in what may be largely untrodden regions. Despite all hindrances, and at whatever cost, the Christian must *keep moving*. To become static is as great a danger for the individual as for the Church. "To the Christian," says one of our foremost thinkers, "the *status quo* is always intolerable except as a stepping-stone to something better." Every man, especially at or after middle age, is dangerously liable to take himself for granted *as he is;* to discount the possibility of fresh change and development. Christ showed His deep knowledge of men in insisting that if we are to be true Christians we must needs become like little children, with the child's glorious sense of wonder, romance, expectancy, with its buoyant feeling that all life is brimful of the most wonderful possibilities only waiting to be discovered and explored.

And the main line of advance is surely clear enough. It is both practical and spiritual; it lies across the regions of living and of thinking. We need, on the one hand, to re-discover and re-experience the fact which was most prominent in early Christianity, namely that to be a Christian involves a man in a *new way of life*, with standards, values, and practices other and higher than those which "the world"

accepts. For a man or woman deliberately to adopt the way of Christ in the midst of the common life of our modern world is invariably a real adventure, and a risky one. How many of us who accept the name of Christian have fairly embarked on it? Have we indeed made any serious and deliberate attempt to think out what this adventure would imply for us personally? It would doubtless mean different things for different people. It is not always easy to know exactly what the will of Christ really involves for ordinary life; it may sometimes appear to conflict with what seem to be obvious duties; duty to family, duty to health, duty to inherited wealth or position, loyalty to business partners, loyalty to class or country. Moreover, the man who is genuinely trying to do what is right according to Christ's standard—and the right path is surely made plain, at last, to everyone who is willing to follow it—may easily find himself misunderstood by fellow Christians whose consuming zeal for the Kingdom is inclined to narrow their judgments. Nevertheless, for the majority of Christians, this adventure would probably entail a very considerable readjustment of our daily living; it would have a disturbing effect on many things that we tend to take for granted: such things as our attitude towards and use of money, our work as employers or employed, as buyer or as seller, and, most of all, our attitude towards other people—the whole region of our social relationships. We should probably lose some friends, though making others; and we might very easily incur dislike, contempt, or hostility. But is there not something suspiciously easy about a religion that

makes no enemies ? And can the world be christianised in any other way than by Christ's followers pursuing, severally and corporately, the personal adventure of " applied Christianity " ?

But, on the other hand, advance here is contingent upon a simultaneous advance in *the region of faith.* If we are to re-discover the Christian way of life, we must have the motive and the power which spring from a re-discovery of Christ's sense of God. There is, in all of us, a shortage of faith ; the supreme lack, in every life, is the lack of God. Our real weakness is our Spiritual poverty. We have been paddling on the edge of the limitless ocean of the life in Christ ; the time has surely come to launch out on to the deep. We have hardly begun to discover what God in Christ will do through those who will make room for Him to live and act in them. I seem to see the time drawing near when men at last, men who long for the Kingdom, will *give God an adequate chance* to work out His plans through them, through their glad and loyal and single-hearted co-operation. . . .

For, when all is said and done, this is the heart and soul of the Great Adventure, this is its mystery and romance, that God really needs us men and women to help Him carry out His purposes, and deliberately offers us the unique joy of labouring with Him. It is just here, surely, that we penetrate to the inner heart of Christianity. He, the Christ, has died for me, He rescues me from my lower self, He lifts me into the intimacy of His companionship, " I am His and He is mine,"—not simply for the purpose that I may be secure and happy and " saved " ; that, though

joyfully true and for me indispensable, is in a sense a by-product of my relationship with Him ;—He does all this that I may be able to fulfil the highest function of my being, which is to be of use, howsoever infinitesimal, to Him and to humanity. If this is so, if, in this sense, *He needs me*, if I can really be of use to His Cause, how can I possibly hang back ? How can I do other than " go all out " on the Great Adventure ? It is sheer honour to spend and be spent for Him and His Kingdom. " God takes all. He takes you, blood and bones, house and acres, He takes skill and influence and expectations. For all the rest of your life you are nothing but God's agent."

There is a moving passage in a moving book, John Masefield's " Gallipoli," where he describes how the final attack at Suvla Bay represented a kind of climax of effort and opportunity, led up to by infinite toil and sacrifice. " There was the storm, there was the crisis, the one picked hour, to which this death and agony . . . had led. Then was the hour for a casting off of self, and a setting aside of every pain and longing and sweet affection, a giving up of all that makes a man to the something which makes a race, and a going forward to death resolvedly to help out their brothers high up above in the shell-bursts and the blazing gorse." Which is a parable, as well as history. To the Church of Christ has come at last her " one picked hour," her supreme opportunity, her final summons to fare forth with God in His great Adventure. The trumpet is sounding, and He, the hero Christ, is calling men after Him. With such a Leader, in such a Cause, pain and loss are forgotten, and sacrifice

ceases to be sacrifice. To be His, and utterly committed to His adventure, is something to exult about; it is that which turns tears into joy. "Verily," as Samuel Rutherford, that faithful "venturer for Christ," used to say, "*Verily it is a King's life to follow the Lamb.*"

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